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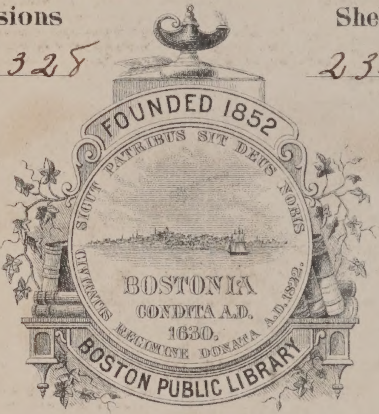
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FOURTH EDITION,

WITH AN

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

AND AN

Original Poem,

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY,
Author of "The World before the Flood," "Songs of Zion," "The Christian Psalmist," "The Christian Poet," &c.

BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY CROCKER AND BREWSTER,
47, Washington Street:
NEW-YORK:—JONATHAN LEAVITT,
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1833.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, to wit:
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BE IT REMEMBERED, that on the sixth day of April, A. D. 1829, in the fifty third year of the Independence of the United States of America, CROCKER & BREWSTER, of the said District, have deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof they claim as Proprietors, in the words following, *to wit:*

"Memoirs of the late Mrs. Susan Huntington, of Boston, Mass., By Benjamin B. Wisner, Pastor of the Old South Church in Boston. Third edition. With an introductory Essay, and an Original Poem, by James Montgomery, author of "The World before the Flood," "Songs of Zion," "The Christian Psalmist," "The Christian Poet," &c.

In Conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled, "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the Authors and Proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;" and also to an act, entitled, "An act supplementary to an act, intitled, An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned; and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical, and other prints."

JOHN W. DAVIS,
Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

A FEW days after the delivery of the sermon which makes a part of this volume, a much esteemed member of the church under the pastoral care of the compiler, addressed to him a note which contained the following sentences,—"Conversing with some friends upon the subject of your discourse, delivered the last Sabbath, upon the death of our lamented Mrs. Huntington, it was concluded to consult you upon the expediency of giving to the public some of the productions of her pen, which are said to be valuable; connecting with them your sermon. How does the plan strike you? If favorably, will you undertake the selection, and the preparation of the volume?"—The work now presented to the public, owes its origin to this communication. It is, with diffidence, committed to the consideration of friendship, the candor of the public, and the blessing of Almighty God. If it shall be the means of recommending the religion of the Gospel to any individual, or of promoting the consolation and growth in grace of a single follower of Christ, the labor bestowed upon it will not have been in vain.

Boston, May, 1826.

THREE editions of these Memoirs, each of two thousand copies, have been published and sold in the United States, and a fourth edition is now demanded. Several editions have also been published in Great Britain, at Edinburgh, and at Glasgow; the former with recommendatory notices by the Rev. DR. MUIR, and the Rev. DR. GORDON, distinguished clergymen of that city; the latter with the Introductory Essay and Poem, by JAMES MONTGOMERY, which make a part of this volume.—Mr. William Collins, of Glasgow, is publishing a "Series of SELECT CHRISTIAN AUTHORS, with INTRODUCTORY ESSAYS, designed to consist of the most popular and practical works on the subject of Christianity; to embrace the most valuable and select portions of eminent theological writers, whether of the Established, Nonconformist, or Dissenting denominations, and the Lives of those who have been eminent for piety, learning, and christian usefulness." The Series consists of such works as Baxter's Saints' Rest, Halyburton's Memoirs, M'Laurin's Essays, Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul, Butler's Analogy of Religion, Edwards on Religious Affections, Owen on Indwelling Sin, Wilberforce's Practical View, Pascal's Thoughts, Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, &c. &c. The Introductory Essays are by the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D. D., Thomas Erskine, Esq. Rev. Robert Gordon, D. D. William Wilberforce, Esq., Rev. Andrew Thompson, D. D., James Montgomery, Esq., Rev. Charles Simeon, Rev. John Foster, &c. &c The Memoirs of Mrs. Huntington are No. 41 of this series.

Boston, August, 1833.

INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

There is a world of invisible beings among us, whose influences are perpetually acting upon our minds, directing our pursuits, and shaping our characters. Who are these? —They are not celestial intelligences, employed for the glory of God in the service of man. They are not fallen angels, in this revolted province of the Almighty's empire, permitted to tempt and harass its inhabitants, during their period of trial and probation. Nor are they the spirits of just men made perfect, who, as many amiable and excellent persons (without any authority from revelation) suppose, may be commissioned to watch over surviving relatives, comfort them in trouble, and help them on their way to join themselves in paradise.—No; they are none of these:—yet are they of the number of those, who, in every age and country, have lived and died, not for themselves alone, but for their contemporaries and posterity;—they are *those* in a word, *all* those, who are recorded in history for their good or evil deeds; who have benefitted or plagued mankind, by their virtues or their vices; benefitted them, by discoveries in science, inventions in art, and works in literature; or by their labors, their sufferings, and triumphs, in the cause of truth—the truth of any kind, but especially the truth of the Gospel;—plagued them, by exercising the most heroic qualities for the oppression and misery of their fellow creatures, or by employing the noblest talents for the perversion of the minds and corruption of the morals, of all whom their sayings or their writings could reach. The beings, then, of whom we speak, either by their examples held up in perpetual remembrance, or by productions of genius, which have survived the destruction of empires, and the changes of dynasties on the face of the earth, continue to this day, more or less, to form the manners and control the destinies of all people, by whom the first may be known, and the latter studied.

It is far above a vulgar fate to be registered in a genealogical table a few centuries after death, though but to fill the space of so many letters as spell the name thus rescued from oblivion. It is a step higher towards the temple of fame to be sung in poetry, though only to swell out the harmony of a verse:

—"fortemque Guyan, fortemque Cloanthum."

But to have left on record one saying, repeated through all ages as a maxim of wisdom; to have been the founder of one class of men, distinguished as a body among their contemporaries; to have performed one act of invincible fortitude, like Mutius Scævola, when he laid his right hand upon the burning coals because it had mistaken its victim, and slain but a courtier, when it aimed at a king; or, like Decius Mus, to have rushed, a self-devoted sacrifice, into the heart of the enemy's array, to secure victory to his countrymen;—this is to be exalted to the rank of one of those invisibles to whom we have alluded,—one who has had his share, however small and indiscernible, in making some others different from what they would have been without such bias, and so far aided in bringing human society itself to its existing state. In like manner, they who have left material monuments, though now in ruins, exercise dominion over the living, by furnishing inexhaustible models of imitation, or inimitable objects of rivalry. The nameless artists, who hewed from blank marble the Venus de Medici and the Apollo Belvidere; the mechanical hands that wrought the sculptures of the Parthenon; the forgotten architects of Gothic cathedrals, and the builders of the Pyramids, equally forgotten;—these, though unregistered here, have yet a being in that invisible world, whose inhabitants we are revealing, as influential agents, though no longer either corporeal or spiritual existences among us.

Now these invisible beings, who thus "rule our spirits from their urns," or being dead, yet speak with immortal voices,—though they be of all ages and countries, from creation till yesterday, and from Japan to California,—are all contemporaries in that sphere which they occupy. Adam,—for Adam is the first, and the lord of the ascendant among them,—Adam is contemporary with all his posterity, down to those who were last promoted to this peerage. Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander and Cesar, Jenghis Khan and Bonaparte, are simultaneously training up heroes and spoilers of mankind. Moses and Solon, the Decemviri and Justinian, with our own great Alfred, inferior only to the first, are at this hour teaching statesmen to govern realms, which violence has subdued or liberty recovered. Solomon and Socrates, Bacon and Newton, and Locke, are daily instructing the same scholars in wisdom, science, and morals. Demosthenes and Cicero are yet the masters in eloquence, from whose tongues enraptured students catch "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," to quicken their own minds, and touch with fire their own lips. Homer and Virgil, Tasso and Milton, never cease, by their songs, from inspiring youthful bards in all ages, who, seeing the dreams of glory of their predecessors realized, thence augur the fulfilment of their own. That the living population of this country are, in a great measure, *what they are*, by *what they have learnt* from a multitude of forerunners, cannot be doubted by any one who has himself had intellectual communion with the great, the learned, and the good, of past times, and ascertained the effects of such fellowship on his own life.

As children, in respect to their intellectual condition, are born blanks, to be inscribed with the characters which parents, companions, tutors, and the state of society around them, gradually impress upon their minds, subject to the modifications, which are produced by their own awakened powers, and the silent, perhaps unknown, operations of God's Holy Spirit upon their hearts, or the malignant influences of Satan and his emissaries who may have access to the same:—as children do thus, in a great degree, grow up to be what examples and circumstances make them, so is every generation collectively more or less fashioned according to the precedents, not only of their immediate ancestors, but of their pre-existent fellow-creatures of all countries, whose history and literature may be read and studied in their own. Utterly savage nations, having no history or literature, no commerce with an invisible world, are but what their fathers have been before them, and leave nothing to their posterity beyond what they themselves inherited. They live and die unimproved by the experience of others, and unimproving others by their own; so that their condition is only stationary, because they are incapable of sinking lower, being already but worms in the dust of existence, crawling forth by accident, and hastily retreating into darkness. Such seem to be some of the Caffre hordes of South Africa, and the aborigines of New Holland. The unchangeable manners of barbarians are remarkably exemplified by the fact, that the Greenlanders and the Esquimaux, residing two thousand miles apart, have the same language with little variation, the same shaped clothing, boats, fishing tackle, and construction of huts, as well as corresponding superstitions, in lieu of religion. Such absolute coincidence between two originally distinct tribes were impossible, (though the nature of their several climates and their similar occupations would induce the expectation of general resemblance;) but here, that coincidence has continued to exist, while, from the impassable gulphs and deserts, nine months of the year more frozen than the alps, between Greenland and Labrador, no intercourse can have taken place for a period beyond the power of calculation. Yet even these savages, before Christianity raised them to the rank of men, and prepared them to be associates with angels, and worshippers of God in his eternal temple, were superior in ingenuity, intelligence, and enterprise, to the brutish New Hollander and the idiotic Bushman. It is difficult to imagine how either of these clans could ever have emerged from their ice-berg state, while they had no history, no literature, no commerce with an invisible world. The gospel brought all these to them; and thus transformed them from darkness to light, socially and intellectually, as well as turned them spiritually from the power of Satan to serve the living God.

Semi-barbarians have history and tradition, truth and fable, poetry and science, of some kind, monstrously and inextricably blended. Hence the little morality to be traced in their religion is so atrociously assimilated with impurity, as to aggravate every evil, while it is almost impotent for any good. Such are the Hindoos and Chinese. These are greater, and wiser, and in some respects better, for what has been done for them by the dead; though, from a paralyzing attachment to what they have received, they neglect to add to it: while, not continuing the process begun before their birth, they remain wilfully impracticable subjects for superior improvement. After all, their commerce with that world of invisible beings, whose influences we are illustrating, is so very imperfect, that they see them but as the half-opened eye saw "men like trees walking." Their records of events and ideas of truths are correspondingly out of due proportion;—in Hindostan all is shadowy, gigantic, multitudinous; in China all is puerile, little, and fantastical.

Nations a little higher in civilization are those, which have more authentic history, more elevated poetry, and more advanced science. Such were the Saracens, of the middle ages, and such (though miserably degraded) are some of their modern descendants. These having been emancipated from the mental thraldom of idolatry, and having received the first great truth of revelation, that there is but one God,—"no God but God," in their own phrase—though that glorious confession was impiously associated with the most flagrant lie of their false teacher—"and Mahomet is his prophet,"—these, we say, were exalted far above all the philosophers and devotees of the eastern world; a great portion of which they were enabled to subjugate, by the superiority in arts not less than in arms, which they derived from their ancestors, whose deeds were celebrated in genuine annals, and whose works in every department of literature, from the most abstruse to the most fanciful, are yet the glory of Arabia and Persia.

Once more. In Europe there are many kindred, and people and tongues, who border on barbarism, or excel in civilization, just in proportion as they have received and improved the lessons of wisdom, which their fathers bequeathed them,—and not their fathers only, but the illustrious of all nations, ancient and modern, whose virtues, whose actions, and whose talents, have left indestructible monuments in their own works, or in the works of others, for the benefit of all the human race who may ever have access to the knowledge of them. It would not be difficult to arrange and class the states of Christendom according to the social character of their various populations, when those would invariably be found highest in intelligence, who have the largest and most familiar commerce with the world of the departed, but unforgotten, of all ages and countries. Those, too, would be found to stand highest, not only in intelligence, but in comparative virtue, who are most under the influence of the best examples; and whose laws, institutions, and literature are most conformed to these. Thus Spain and Portugal are exceedingly low, because almost unacquainted with the glories of Greece and Rome, while they are strangers to the light of life in the holy Scriptures. Hence (except poetry) they have hardly any literature beyond that of the tales of chivalry, and little religion but that of the legends of saints. In Germany, there is a resurrection of mind, by a revival of research among the treasures of neglected learning for nobler purposes than mere verbal criticism. The various tribes of that heterogeneous empire are rising, therefore, to moral and intellectual grandeur, by their renewed communion with the invisible world, and the conflict and collision of generous spirits awakened by that circumstance, and which, perhaps no other circumstance could have awakened. Italy, rich in history, poetry, romance, the fine arts, the liberal sciences,—rich in inherited, acquired and accumulated knowledge of every kind, except the true knowledge of divine truth,—Italy rivals, if not transcends, all contemporaries in productions of genius, appealing to the senses, the understanding, the imagination, or the affections; yet, morally, she is on a level with the most debased, by servility and superstition, because she substitutes for the oracles of God the traditions of men,—mercenary, profligate, atheistical men. Of France, with some modifications to her disparagement, and a few to her advantage, the same may be said as of Italy.

Our own country, formerly deemed as waste and excommunicate as we think the wilderness of Siberia,—now, neither so highly exalted by the examples of Greece and Rome, as Italy, nor so conceitedly enslaved by them as France, has nevertheless been sufficiently swayed, to have greatly profited in all that adorns and dignifies man in political and civil society; while she has enjoyed one blessing superior to both, and which has placed her above all competition in true glory and true happiness. Wickliffie, *before* the Reformation, loosed the Word of God, which had been bound almost a thousand years. The way was thus prepared in this island *for* the Reformation: and that Reformation, by the freedom which it brought with it,—freedom of thought, freedom of speech, freedom of action; a threefold cord spontaneously twined and not soon broken; that Reformation, by the freedom which it brought with it, caused the gospel, its precepts and sanctions, in process of time, so to mould the laws, policy, manners, and benevolent institutions of our countrymen, as to make the latter nationally, if not individually, more upright, honorable and conscientious in principle, than can be said of any other people in existence. The history of the last half century is proof of this, during which, whatever have been the sins of government or subjects, in particular instances, our character has been refining, and, at the same time, rising in the estimation of foreigners, till our enemies themselves in extremities, had more confidence in us than in each other; so that, without boasting, it may be said, both in the literal and figurative sense of the terms, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is (Great Britain) on the sides of the north." Psalm xlviii, 2. What hath made her so? Her children have had free and happy communication, beyond all others, with the world of invisible beings among them, consisting not only of heroes, legislators, princes, philosophers, poets, painters, sculptors, historians, orators, and pagan worthies, who have flourished in all lands since the flood,—but especially of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and righteous men, who first declared the truths of Revelation to a world lying in wickedness, or have sealed with their blood, and exemplified by their lives, that the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

An imaginary, but, happily impossible case, may illustrate the value and extent of that influence for which we contend, over the well-being and well-doing of consecutive generations. Were all knowledge, remembrance, and record of past ages obliterated; all books of science, religion, eloquence, and poesy, destroyed; all relics of ancient sculpture and masonry crumbled to dust; and were nothing left to the living race of men but the actual information which they had individually acquired from these sources, with the power of communicating the same, *in their own words only*, to their offspring and contemporaries;—it cannot be questioned, that society would abruptly retrograde, and must continue to do so, till a sufficient stock of *documentary* literature had been accumulated by the slow labor of superior minds, through many a century, to enable posterity again to advance towards the point from which the fall—second only to the fall in Paradise—had commenced. It is manifest, that without the aid of those writings, in which our progenitors have perpetuated their intellectual existence among us, it would be impracticable to support the intellectual progress of mankind, as we now see it accelerated among all classes of people in this country. It is not the mere hoards committed to memory, in which the available wealth of a scholar consists;—it is the sum of all the facts, examples, and lessons, which have been put by the press beyond the power or the failure of memory, to which he has access, at every moment, and on every emergency, by being master of the language in which any portion of these may be included, and knowing where to find what he wants, either for the enlargement of his own stores, or the communication of useful instruction to others. Between the means of diffusing knowledge, which are now possessed by joint inheritance, and those which would be limited to the imperfect recollections of comparatively a few persons, in the event which we have supposed—the extinction of all written and monumental records—there would be precisely the relative difference that exists between the situation of a noble heir coming to the whole patrimony and honors of his ancient house, and that of a younger brother with a portion, payable indeed out of the estate, but not equal to one year's rental, and the rank of his lineage allowed to him only by courtesy.

To this world of invisible beings—in some respects the good and evil genii of the living, with whom these hold converse by what is known of them through books, though they themselves are unconscious of the dominion which they exercise—like the stars, in their guidance of the mariner on the deep, the moon in her government of the tide, and the sun in his reign over animal and vegetable existence;—to this world of invisible beings, there are continual accessions of many temporary, and a few imperishable names, consisting of every one who leaves a memorial of himself, from which posterity receives either a transient or more enduring impression. The multitude of these pass away from ideal, as soon, or even sooner, than they did from real existence; but in every age, at this advanced period of civilization, there are *some* who, having once lived, never die, in the perpetuated consequences, whether good or evil, of their bodily appearance, and intercourse with their species. Now, these more effectually color and shape the character of society, than they could, if their disembodied spirits were permitted to hold communion with the living, and suggest, control, or inspire them with the same feelings and sentiments which their memory or their productions absolutely do impress. How little could the soul of Milton have done, had it been walking to and fro, and going up and down in the earth, during the hundred and fifty years since his death,—how little could it have done, by awakening genius, and guiding its aspirations, in a few solitary individuals, (without ascribing to it inconceivable and miraculous powers) in comparison with what that soul, embodied in divine poetry, has actually done for thousands and tens of thousands, by ennobling, adorning, and enriching the meanest readers with a measure of the grandeur, beauty, and wealth of his own high intellect, which (fixed in the eternity of verse,) can no more be exhausted by communicating itself, than the sun by shining, or the atmosphere by giving breath? Could the magnificent spirit that dictated the numbers of Paradise Lost, from the lips of "the poet blind yet bold,"—could that spirit, by any imaginable process of secret communication, through half a human life, have raised in *one* mind, that exaltation of feeling, to which the perusal of the first book alone must carry every mind of sufficient capacity to comprehend it? No, certainly; for to have done this, the visitant must have inspired his disciple with the power of *producing* a poem, equal to that, the mere perusal of which gives any body the means of enjoying, at once and without cost, all the fruits of all the labors of thought that produced the original.

The last forty years have added more to the class of invisibles, whom we recognise here, than any former period of thrice that term; while the press, by its everlasting operations, in every edition of an author's works, renews the lease of each of the fraternity of every foregoing era, who, in his pages, are made to live, and move, and have a being, among us. Numerous, indeed, are the warriors, politicians, philosophers, and authors, who have flourished since the commencement of the French revolution, and of whom it cannot be doubted, that they are destined to go down to remote posterity as angels of light, or spirits of darkness—assuming the forms of such to those who may be deluded by them—till the consummation of all things, when, at the general resurrection, all distinctions of rank, age, and country, shall be obliterated, all generations shall be contemporary, and congregated, to receive, not in mass, but individually, as if each stood alone before the Judge of quick and dead, "the deeds done in the body." As a part of these, for a deed is never done till it has ceased in its consequences,—long after the stone has sunk to the bottom, never to rise again, the surface of the stream is troubled with the whirls of its plunge,—as a part of these will be reckoned all the evil thoughts and unholy passions excited by profligate writers, in the hearts and minds of persons who lived centuries after their decease; with all the ambitious, vindictive, and oppressive actions, which the examples of successful tyrants, and heroic destroyers of their species, have tempted the latest inhabitants of the earth to perpetrate, in imitation of them, and under the sanction of their authority. Nor will the good "deeds done in the body" terminate at their seeming accomplishment, but shall last in their happy and diversified issues, through all ages, on all individuals who may be affected and ameliorated by them. Oh then, of what infinite importance must it be to those, who, when they die, do not "*all* die," that what they leave behind to immortalize them among men, and make men resemble themselves, should be that which will benefit, in the highest degree, the greatest number of their successors and imitators!

To win a name and rank in this world of invisible beings, has been the ambition of the mightiest minds that ever felt houses of clay too narrow for their dwelling, and life too brief for the spirit within them. This might be illustrated by all history and biography extant, as well as proved by the thoughts of many great hearts long perished in the dust, whose secrets have been revealed. These, therefore, have counted no sacrifice too dear, that they might obtain the prize for which they contended, against time and death, and fortune, and each other. It seldom occurs, then, that the achievements or the productions of individuals, in whom existed no intense degree of the desire to be known and honored in after years, have secured to them that moral and influential immortality of which we treat. More frequently, the sufferings of unambitious personages, whom tyranny and persecution, for their worth, or the vengeance of justice, for their enormous crimes, have dragged into the light of history, have thereby become examples or warnings. But it is the rarest of all cases, that those who have simply filled up the measure of their days, in the humble yet honorable performance of the duties that belonged to a private station, which required indeed no splendid qualifications, but what is far more effective, though to be acquired by all, great grace to fulfil,—it is the rarest of all cases, that such have gone down into the darkness of the grave, whither the eye of affection had followed them, and then turned away forever, and yet have left an unexpected light, like an undecaying sunset, behind them; in the comfort of which, not relatives and friends only, but strangers and foreigners, and many born in distant ages after them, have delighted to walk.

Such an one, however, it may be presumed, was MRS. SUSAN HUNTINGTON, whose Memoirs and Remains are presented in this volume, not for the first time, nor probably for the last by many times, to the British public. She is yet too little known, either in her own land or ours, for the most experienced and sagacious critic to pronounce, whether she will speedily disappear with the millions among whom she was, while living, but a unit, or continue to shine alone, as the survivor and representative of unremembered millions, who, like her, having served their generations, fell on sleep, and have seen corruption, dissolution, and extinction of memory itself from the earth. It may now be deemed an even point, whether, embalmed within these leaves, which are sweet with the odor of sanctity, she shall continue to bless the christian world, wherever the language of her mother is spoken; or whether the partiality of friendship has too fondly, not too highly estimated the precious fragments of her journals and letters, endeared as they were to her personal acquaintance, but, possibly, not capable of exciting in the breasts of strangers, corresponding interest in what she was, what she did, what she suffered, and what she has written. That the point should be already even in the balance, is so far in her favor as to be proof positive, that extraordinary unction and piety, combined with talent of no mean, though certainly no ostentatious kind, must characterize her compositions. What, therefore, has raised her so early "above a vulgar fate," may, in its progress, at length fix her in holy and abiding distinction among the just, whose memory is blessed, and the good, whose examples are supposed to make the world better than they found it; —yes, and the world will be better in no small degree, than this excellent woman either found it, or made it, or left it at her decease, if, by the perusal of these pages, the humble christian is encouraged, the weak one strengthened, the mourner comforted, or the poor made rich in faith;—and it is the nature of the volume before us, under the blessing of God, to do this, and much more for its readers, according to their circumstances, wants, or temptations.

In Mrs. Huntington we have an exemplification of christian character in the female sex, rising into grace, expanding into beauty, and flourishing in usefulness, from infancy to youth, and from youth to womanhood; *then*, without reaching old age, translated to Paradise, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water," that brought forth its fruit in due season, and whose leaf also withered not; being cut down in its prime, and remembered only as the glory of the place where it grew. There were no extraordinary incidents in her brief existence; she was endowed with no splendid talents: but on account of these very deficiencies, (defects they were not,) something *more excellent*, yet *attainable by all*, having been found in her, she may be presented as a model to others passing through the same ordinary circumstances, whereby they may form themselves to meet every change, till the last; and in that last, be perfectly prepared for a state beyond the possibility of change forever. Having left no memorials of herself, which can otherwise attract curiosity, or command admiration, than to cause those who have patience to contemplate her quiet course, to magnify the grace of God in her, these memorials, from wanting every other interest but the best, will be more estimable, because more applicable to the personal feelings, conflicts, and duties, of the greatest number of readers. What was good for her, must be good for them; what she *was*, they may be; what she *is*, they may become.

The memoirs and writings of great and gifted personages are undoubtedly more stimulating than those of humbler and better beings; but they are so much beyond general experience and sympathy, that to most who peruse them, they are history and romance, rather than real and every day life. Hence such works are esteemed and enjoyed in proportion as they excite the imagination, or exercise the intellect, rather than as profitable illustrations of what we ourselves may perform, or attain by imitation. Yet, even in the biography of heroes and kings, philosophers and poets—minds of the first order, men of the first magnitude—the most delightful passages are those in which we can claim kindred with them, as beings of like passions with ourselves, in the retirement of domestic life, in their bosom joys and sorrows; compassed with infirmities, on the bed of sickness, and in the agony of death; acting, feeling, thinking, as we ourselves might have done, or may hereafter be soothed by the recollection that so they did. In truth, all that is common to all, is of equal, intense, and eternal importance to each. Of this—this that is most common, this that is most important—the volume before us is full; presenting in succession, the trials of life, from childhood to middle age, in nearly every form in which the mind, the affections, the body or the soul—the mortal and the immortal faculties—can encounter, endure, or overcome them, from the exhilarating transport with which, in health, and amidst felicity, we view the earth full of the goodness, and the heavens covered with the glory of the Lord, to that anguish of heart, under the burthen of which we hear nothing but the groans of creation, and see nothing but the vices and miseries of our species.

Mrs. Huntington's experience, here recorded in her genuine Letters, written for the eye of friendship only, and her Diaries, written for the eye of her own spirit, in which it might see, and from time to time, compare itself with itself more perfectly than it could in the mirror of memory—her experience thus recorded, gives to the reader a peculiarly intimate and affecting knowledge of the most secret emotions of her individual heart; yet not to gratify impertinent, indelicate curiosity; for such is the nature of these discoveries, that they can be interesting and intelligible to those alone, who have proved the same discouragements and revivals in following hard after the Lord, and serving him in the beauties of holiness. To such, the volume on which we are entering, will be a treasury of things new and old; the more valued, the more deeply it is searched, and the more attractive in proportion as it is studied for purposes of edification. In every page will be found some lesson or precept, some warning or precedent, to guide the christian inquirer in nearly every circumstance of bodily, mental, or spiritual difficulty. She had enjoyed, and she had suffered, all the comforts arising out of the endearing relationships of life, and all the anguish which the bereavement of each of these in turn could inflict. Parents, sisters, husband, children, she had known, and loved, and lost, and long lamented too: yet had she found the consolations of the gospel abounding amidst her deepest afflictions. Her love and resignation to Him, who gave and took away, at *his* pleasure, but for *her* profit, continued to increase, as her affections were loosened below, and fixed on things above, while the very ties that once bound her to earth, were employed by the hand of mercy to draw her up to heaven.

There is a refined and elevated sympathy awakened towards the dead, whom we thus recognise only as of the ineffable number of influential beings, whose lives are prolonged in their history, and whose souls may be said to transmigrate through the persons of their imitators; or whose thoughts, enshrined in their writings, are communicated to innumerable minds, like sunbeams refracted on raindrops, or gliding through colorless chrystals. This ennobling sympathy, by indulgence grows into an affection, and that affection into a virtue, because it is attached to virtue as its object, and is the parent of virtue in ourselves, when we are made conformable to that which we loved and admire. But though the present volume may be a blessing to all into whose hands it may come, and to whose hearts it may speak in that pure and beautiful language, which the spirit of the writer herself would hardly disown in her beatified state; yet to the better sex especially—to the young, the beloved, the betrothed, the wedded, and the bereaved among them, this book deserves to be a manual for daily perusal and nightly meditation. All that a daughter or a sister, a wife, a mother, or a widow can feel, is either briefly but clearly, or largely and glowingly set forth. Her simple and unreserved confessions will be found the more immediately profitable, because nothing happened to her beyond what may come to each of themselves in the ordinary course of Providence. Notwithstanding her extraordinary natural vivacity, she was, from early age, such a sufferer, by the martyrdom of sensibilities too exquisitely touched by joy or wo, that she might say, "I die daily;" yet held she fast, and faster she held it to the end, the hope which she had in the gospel. This alone sustained her under the heaviest dispensations, and this bore her through them triumphantly at last. "I delight to do thy will, O God." This phrase expresses the sum of her character, as here exhibited; this was the burthen of her prayers, the object of her faith, the prize of her high calling in Christ Jesus her Lord; and this, we may believe, is now the crown of her rejoicing in his presence. To mothers, but above all, to widowed mothers, these pages may be earnestly recommended for diligent study; and if they have the happy effect of forming one mother like their author, they may be deemed a greater bequest to a world lying in wickedness, than a thousand elaborate productions of unsanctified genius, which, while they elevate man as an intellectual being, too often alienate him from God, as a being in search of knowledge at the price of death.

There is a perceptible gradation in these Letters and Diaries, showing the growth of the writer in wisdom and in grace; it may be added also, in favor with God and man. The fastidious reader, who may only tolerate the compositions of her youth, and think them too prematurely good to hope for any amendment afterwards, will feel more and more conciliated and charmed with those written during her happy marriage; and still more deeply and devotedly will he find himself enchained in attention, by those of her mournful yet rejoicing widowhood. Her mind appears to have expanded, her heart softened, and her piety purified to the end; the energy and eloquence of her effusions—for such are all her reliques here, the overflowings of a soul poured out into the bosom of friendship, or before her God—are increased, and appear at the very height in her latest days. But her sun went down suddenly. When she was most fitted for earth, and for doing her Father's will upon it, she was quite matured for heaven; and thither removed by an excrutiating illness, wherein she glorified God by the death which she died, as she had done by the life which she lived.

Towards the close of any book of biography, in which we have been peculiarly interested, there is something of apprehension experienced, as we approach the last pages; we know the catastrophe which consummates every work of the kind, because the same is the consummation of every human life. Whose heart has not palpitated? whose hand has not trembled, as if it felt a feebler pulse at turning over leaf after leaf? and whose eye has not keenly, eagerly, yet afraid and revoltingly, glanced on to the very line in which the last agony is described, as though it saw the dying look of one, who had been "very pleasant in life," and from whom, even "in the volume of the book," it was hard to be divided? Yea, and we read with prophetic anticipation, the record of the last moments of our endeared companion, as one warning more of our own being so much the nearer than when we first became acquainted, though it were but a few days ago. In the instance of early mortality before us, those who have reached the eminence of life, and passed their half century, will naturally look back on a time, when they lived, and moved, and had a being, while she had none; and still they live, and move, and have their being when she is no more. She has been born, grown up, and blessedly fulfilled the purpose for which a body and breath were given to her, and is gone into eternity within the date of our remembered and continued existence. The whole circle of her life has been enclosed in the yet unperfected compass of our own. And where is *she?* and whither are *we* going? Death to survivors is but the disappearance of one among those on whom we are accustomed to look with indifference or affection, according to our degree of relationship with them. What death is to the departed, those who have not experienced it can no more comprehend, than we ourselves could have anticipated our present state, had we been pre-existent spirits in another, and threatened, for some breach of duty, with the punishment of being born into a world, where we should be confined in "houses of clay, which are crushed before the moth," and suffer hunger, thirst, pain, anxiety, and all the "ills that flesh is heir to." Both kinds of knowledge will soon be ours. Angels cannot conceive what it is to be man: to know *that*, in a manner which Deity itself could not otherwise know it, the Son of God became man; and through his humiliation to our estate, we may be made partakers of the divine nature. To this end he was born, and for this cause came he into the world, to the same end, and for the same cause, the lives and deaths of those in whom the glorious object of his incarnation was accomplished, are held in remembrance, that by their examples we may be led to become followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises. Among these we cannot hesitate to place the amiable and exalted woman, whose name and worth, as illustrated in these pages, will not soon be forgotten.

Mrs. Huntington's Letters and Diaries, are principally valuable because they are genuine and true, in the best sense of those terms;—*genuine*, as written for the sole purpose of conveying her sentiments to others, or preserving memorandums for her own self-improvement, without any sinister reference to the possibility of their being ever laid before the world; and *true*, because they express the real, present feelings of the author, under various trials, in which heart and mind were equally and severely exercised from time to time. In these ingenuous and unsophisticated productions, there is little either of the warmth or coloring of imagination; no brilliancy of ornament; few descriptions of natural scenery: the narratives are brief; except the account of the last hours of her husband, but that indeed, penned under the inspiration of the subject, displays a power and pathos, rarely exhibited on other occasions. Her English is remarkably pure; the diction is flowing, and her compositions in general are distinguished by maturity of thought, and correctness of style, without extravagance in the one, or efflorescence in the other.

The blossoms of her mind were like the delicate bloom of wheat, not the pageantry of flowers; they were the promise of precious seed, good for food, not the evanescent attractions of the butterfly and the bee. The letters and diaries grow more tenderly, and at length more intensely interesting, as the sorrows and troubles of the writer increase. The sufferer herself, indeed, grows brighter and brighter to the eye of the reader, as she passes through the fires, glorifies God in them, and more deeply receives the impression of the divine image. We must have delineations of human feelings and infirmities to touch our hearts, in works of this kind, or we should soon be weary of reading meditations and precepts, however excellent in matter, and unexceptionable in delivery. Were the writer of this introduction to describe Mrs. Huntington's character, as it has been fixed in *his* mind, by the perusal of this volume, he should prefer her own description of Harriet Newell's, as fixed upon *her* mind, after reading the memoirs of that illustrious handmaid of the Lord, who died as a missionary in India, at an earlier age than Mrs. H. herself:—"Such unreserved and disinterested devotedness to the cause of Christ, in so young a person, appears very extraordinary in these times of religious indifference and sloth. There was an elevation and spirituality in her character, seldom met with in the present day. No one can help admiring her excellence. Christians will be humbled by its contemplation, and stimulated to greater activity in the service of Christ."

Mrs. Huntington had always a great desire to serve the cause of God, and benefit her fellow-creatures. She did both, in an eminent degree, according to her means, during her brief life. In this respect, however, her heart's desire and prayer has been granted in a manner which she never could have contemplated. She is already one of those invisibles, whose thoughts perished not in the day when their bodies died. Through the medium of her letters and diaries, here rescued from oblivion, she may continue to serve the cause of God, and benefit thousands of her contemporaries, if not millions of her successors.

Returning to the idea, with which this Essay commenced—not by the invisible agents alone, whose memory and works are preserved to exercise unceasing influence in civilized countries, over successive generations, is such influence monopolized. Every individual who has been born into the world, and lived long enough to excite any emotion of love, antipathy, or fear in the breast of another, has done something towards making the world of the living what it is; and every one that dies, after having filled his station in society, however humble, leaves the world something different from what it would have been, had he never existed. Not one of us knows how far our personal influence extends over those around us; much less how remotely what we have been, and done, and said, may affect those that come after, when we are dead, and forgotten, like the cedars of Lebanon that flourished before the days of David and Solomon,—which, though felled and wrought for ten thousand common uses, were yet the progenitors of trees from whose timbers the temple of God was framed and beautified. We have, therefore, not only each our own, but each the welfare of others to care for, —not to do them evil, at any rate; and by all means possible to do them good. How then ought we to act and speak before men, that we be not condemned before God! One talent well employed, may be made eternally beneficial to the souls of those, whom, though we never knew them as contemporaries, we may be glad to know and to love in that world where there is no succession of coming and going generations, but all who live shall live for ever there.

In the volume before us, there are many brief sentences which will find their way into prepared bosoms, with a power and a glory only short of revelation; and these will be made blessings inestimable to those who receive them. From the entrance of one or another of these into the heart, many a sinner here, or at the ends of the earth, in the present age, or a century to come, may remember the moment of awakening that led to conversion—conversion that saved his soul from death, and covered his multitude of sins. The hand that is penning this paragraph on the 5th of June, 1828, belongs to a human being, in health and strength, who yet knows not that he shall live to finish it. Eyes which have never looked on him will assuredly read what he is now writing, and though but a few moments remain before this Essay must be concluded, or left unfinished forever, it is possible for those moments to be so well employed, in transcribing a "word in season," that the soul of an immortal may hence date the turning point in its career, when for itself it decided in the affirmative, the question which Mrs. Huntington, after "a solemn consideration," in her own mind, at the age of three years, decided in the negative, (but happily afterwards reversed the false judgment,)—"whether is it best to be a christian *now*, or *not yet*." What then shall the "word in season be, which may thus influence the everlasting destiny of some living or unborn individual? Surely it must be one that shall establish the wisdom of this most exemplary woman's better choice. Then let it be that which was selected for the text of her funeral sermon; the truth of which was proved by her whole experience, and testified by her lips, in life and in death,—"ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD."

J. M.

Sheffield, *June* 5, 1828.

"TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD."

ROMANS viii. 28.

Yes; "all things work together for their good!"
How can that glorious truth be understood?
'Tis like Jehovah's throne, where marvellous light
Hides in thick darkness from created sight;
The first-born seraph, trembling while he sings,
Views its veil'd lustre through his shadowy wings,
Or, if he meets, by unexpected grace,
The beatific vision, face to face,
Shrinks from perfection which no eye can see,
Entranced in the abyss of Deity.

Yes; "all things work together for their good!"
How shall the mystery be understood?
From man's primeval curse are these set free,
Sin slain, death swallow'd up in victory?
The body from corruption so refined,
'Tis but the immortal vesture of the mind?
The mind from folly so to wisdom won,
'Tis but a sun-beam of the Eternal Sun?

Ah, no, no:—all that troubles life is theirs;
Hard toil, sharp suffering, slow-consuming cares;
To mourn and weep; want raiment, food, and rest;
Brood o'er the unutter'd anguish of the breast;

To love, to hope, desire, possess in vain,
Wrestle with weakness, weariness, and pain,
Struggle with fell disease from breath to breath,
And every moment die a moment's death!

This is their portion, this the common lot.
But they have sorrows which the world knows not:
—Their conflicts with that world, its fair false joys,
Insnaring riches and delusive toys;
Its love, its hatred, its neglect and scorn,
And self-abhorrence, harder to be borne;
The pangs of conscience, when God's holy law,
Through Sinai's thunders, strikes them dumb with awe;
Passions disorder'd, when insane desires
Blow the dark embers of unhallow'd fires;
Evils that lurk at ambush in the heart,
And shoot their arrows thence through every part;
Harsh roots of bitterness, light seeds of sin,
Oft springing up, and stirring strife within;
Pride, like the serpent vaunting to deceive,
As with his subtlety beguiling Eve;
Ambition, like the great red dragon, hurl'd
With all his host, from heaven to this low world,
Boundless in wrath, as limited in power,
Ramping abroad, and roaring to devour:
These, which blithe sinners laugh at and contemn,
Are worse than famine, sword, and fire to them.

Nor these alone;—for neither few nor small
The trials rising from their holy call:
—The Spirit's searching, proving, cleansing flames;
Duty's demands, the Gospel's sovereign claims;
Meek self-denial, counting all things loss
For Christ, and daily taking up his cross;

The broken heart, or heart that will not break,
That aches not, or that cannot cease to ache;
Doubts and misgivings, lest when storms are past,
They make sad shipwreck of their faith at last:
—These, and a thousand forms of fear and shame,
Bosom-temptations, which have not a name,
But have a nature, felt through flesh and bone,
Through soul and spirit,—felt by them alone;
These, these, the Christian pilgrims sore distress,
Like thorns and briers of the wilderness;
These keep them humble, keep them in the path,
As those who flee from everlasting wrath;
Yet while their hearts and hopes are fix'd above,
As those who lean on everlasting love,
On faithfulness, which, though heaven's pillars bend,
And earth's base fail, upholds them to the end.

By these, by these alone, 'tis understood,
How "all things work together for their good."
Wouldst thou too understand?—Behold, I show
The perfect way—LOVE GOD, AND THOU SHALT KNOW.

J. MONTGOMERY.

June 5, 1828.

MEMOIRS.

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Mrs. Susan Huntington was a daughter of the Rev. Achilles Mansfield, of Killingworth, in the State of Connecticut. In this place her father was ordained to the ministry of the Gospel, in the year 1779, and continued the Pastor of the First Church, until death closed his labors in 1814. This gentleman was a native of New Haven, a graduate at Yale College, and a respectable, useful, and much esteemed minister of Christ; and, for many years previous to his death, was a member of the Corporation of the College at which he had received his education. On the maternal side, Mrs. Huntington was descended from that pious man, so illustrious in the annals of the New-England churches, the Rev. John Elliot, of Roxbury, Mass., who will bear to future ages, the honorable title of 'the Indian Apostle.' Mrs. Mansfield was a daughter of Joseph Elliot, of Killingworth, whose father, Jared Elliot, D. D., minister of Killingworth, was a son of the Rev. Joseph Elliot, of Guilford, Conn., and grandson of the venerable John Elliot, of Roxbury.

Susan Mansfield was the youngest of three children. She was born January 27, 1791. Her childhood was marked by sensibility, sobriety, and tenderness of conscience, and a taste for reading. Her education was chiefly under the paternal roof, and at the common schools in her native town. The only instruction she received from any other source, was at a classical school kept in Killingworth, during two seasons. Her parents, however, devoted much of their time and attention to her instruction. And, as her constitution was delicate from infancy, she was suffered to gratify her inclination, in devoting most of her time to the cultivation of her mind, by reading and efforts at composition.

In reference to the formation of her religious character, a friend of her youth remarks, in a letter to the compiler, "Blessed as she was with a tenderness of conscience very unusual, from her earliest years, which was exhibited in all her intercourse at home and abroad, and with the faithful instructions of her parents, who were living examples of what Christians ought to be, and were constantly endeavoring to instil into the minds of their children sentiments of piety, of the deepest reverence towards God, of love to the Savior, and of universal benevolence and good will towards men,—it is difficult to fix on any precise time when her serious impressions commenced. She appeared to have been, in a measure, sanctified from her birth, and, from the first dawn of reason, to need only to be informed what her duty was, to perform it." There is evidence, however, that, for a time at least after she was capable of understanding her duty and her obligations to God, her heart was not devoted to him. In a letter to her son, dated Jan. 13, 1823, she speaks of having a distinct remembrance of a solemn consultation in her mind, when she was about three years old, whether it was best to be a Christian then or not, and of having come to the decision that it was not. But the God to whom she had been dedicated, and whose blessing her parents had so often and fervently supplicated in her behalf, did not suffer her long to rest in this sinful determination. When about five years of age, she was brought by the Holy Spirit to consider the duty and consequences of becoming a Christian indeed more seriously, and, in the opinion of her parents, and of other pious acquaintances, to choose God for her portion. Of the correctness of this conclusion of her parents and friends, she always entertained doubts, and regarded a season of deeper, and, in her view, more scriptural religious impression, when about ten years of age, as the commencement of holiness in her heart. She made a public profession of her faith in Christ, and joined the church of which her father was pastor, on the 19th of April, 1807; having just entered her seventeenth year.

About this time she commenced a private Journal, which was continued till her marriage, but which she destroyed a short time before her death. Of her other writings during the period just mentioned, which were numerous, there remain only some letters, and a few pieces of poetry. The following are extracts from the letters of this early date which the compiler has been able to obtain.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Killingworth, March 8, 1808.

We are all insensible to the innumerable blessings which continually surround us; and unconscious, or regardless of the benevolence of the Almighty Donor. Yet, notwithstanding the hardness of my heart, I think I can join with you, sincerely in blessing the God of mercies for his goodness to his dependant child. You have tasted of the cup of affliction. Yet remember, my dear E., it is the Lord who gives it; and should it excite a murmur? We receive good, and shall we not receive evil also, at his hand? Chastisement is disagreeable to our frail and fallen nature; but it is always intended, and is often made to work for our good. And let me ask you,—and permit me to be serious,—does not this restoration to health loudly speak the benevolence of God? Does it not lay you under increased obligation to devote your life to his service? Believe me, you cannot resolve upon a happier life than the life of a Christian. This is the end for which we were created; consequently, this alone can make us happy. Are not all the pursuits which engage our attention, except religion and those which are consistent with it, vanity? Do we not follow a phantom, which shines but to deceive, which blazes but to ensnare us? We are all in pursuit of happiness; "who will show us any good?" is the universal question. And how can it be better answered, than by pointing to that religion which heals every wound? than by directing the inquirer to the balm in Gilead, and the great Physician there? Real happiness cannot exist in an unrenewed heart. We have lost our felicity, by renouncing the God who is the glorious fountain of everlasting consolation. Yet he has said, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." Self-deceived mortals! how can we slight the words of love which flow from the Judge of all the earth towards his offending, guilty creatures? Christianity alone can make us happy. The cold apathy and insensibility, or suppression of feeling, which was inculcated by some of the ancient philosophers, might dignify a heathen. But their erroneous system of theology was not capable of affording to its disciples that holy peace and heavenly pleasure, which are the blessed effect of real conversion to the religion of Jesus. His voice alone, at whose command the tempest ceased, can speak peace to the troubled spirit. "Thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." "Return ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price!" Blessed be our God that he has not left us without hope!

My dear E., it is my belief that it is our duty, if we are disciples of Christ, to confess him before men. And surely, it is a small, a very small thing to live to Him who died for us. How can we, in the least, discharge the debt of gratitude we owe him? We can never discharge it But we must stand upon the Lord's side, if we are willin to be his, and thus prove that we are not ashamed o Christ. Ashamed of Christ! preposterous idea. No: Christian may blush at *himself*, but he can never b ashamed of the name of his Lord. Surely duty, interest all, call upon us to take refuge under the wing of the Almighty. My dear friend, this is a subject of great importance. "Choose you this day, whom ye will serve," is th momentous proposition continually addressed to us all b our Maker and Redeemer. And think, oh think, of the infinite, the blessed consequences of the happy resolve— "as for me, I will serve the Lord!"

TO ANOTHER FRIEND AT N. H.

Killingworth, March 4, 1808.

I have read the sweet little poem,* whose admirable author you so much admire, and am happy that we are alike pleased with it. Some of his descriptions are inimitably charming and picturesque, and some of his observations concerning the ways of Providence very just, especially when he says,

> One part, one little part, we dimly scan, &c.

in which he is condemning us for doubting the wisdom and goodness of Providence. My ideas correspond with his on this interesting subject, for I firmly believe that

> Oft from apparent ill, our blessings rise.

All things, we are assured, work together for good to them that love God. And, as we are ignorant of the manner in which our heavenly Father is pleased to overrule events for our happiness, it is extremely reprehensible in us to be dissatisfied with any of his appointments. The prayer of the true Christian is, "Make me happy with prosperity: but, above all, give me conformity to, and contentment with, thy will."

I have been reading COWPER also, and love his sentiments, his expressions, and his works, entire, dearly. Perhaps you will think I speak with the rapture of an enthusiast, rather than with the reasonable animation of a reasonable creature. But how can one fail to be delighted with the mild, delicate, and pious sentiments which continually flow from the amiable author of THE TASK? In all his expressions he is "simple, grave, sincere;" his style alike removed from the turgid and the weak, and peculiarly free from that affectation which was his "perfect scorn."

I cannot sufficiently express the value I place upon this excellent work. Some of his "Winter evening" descriptions fill me with pleasure. I, in fancy, visit the lonely spot he describes, and wander with him over each heath and plain. I love the man for his meek and benevolent spirit. His writings are entirely free from that acrimony (which distinguishes some of the English poets) of satire against any class whom he disliked.

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*Beattie's Minstrel.

The intelligence that the Lord is visiting you with the showers of his grace, and causing the Sun of righteousness to shine on N. H., and the neighboring towns, affords me unspeakable pleasure. If I know my own heart, I ardently long for the universal promulgation and reception of that religion which alone can make men happy. And, blessed be the God of mercies! he will not leave his work unfinished. I rejoice that so many are hopefully turned from darkness to light. May this happy state of things long continue, and your light shine more and more, unto the perfect day.

TO A FRIEND AT N. Y.

Killingworth, June 3, 1808.

Your observations respecting our inability to attain resignation of ourselves, so as to say unreservedly to our heavenly Father, 'Thy will be done,' are undoubtedly just. But let us not forget the nature of this inability. It is not such as furnishes any excuse or extenuation of our sins, when we are not resigned; but is the very thing that constitutes our guilt, proceeding from the opposition of our hearts to the character and government of God. It should therefore produce in us deep humiliation and contrition, and drive us to the foot of the cross. The want of this resignation, this perfect acquiescence in the will of God, is one of the principal sources of the unhappiness of which we constantly complain. Could we acquiesce with cheerfulness in the dispensations of an unerring providence, we should at once feel a spark of celestial happiness enkindled in our hearts. But this is a state of which frail humanity comes far short, at the best. We wish to have this or that desire complied with; and think that, could we but obtain the accomplishment of our wishes, we should be blessed indeed. But it is *best* they should not be granted; the wisdom and goodness of God assure us it is so. And yet, because they are denied, we sink into despondency and grief. My dear friend, I believe that if we could view things as they really are, we should find reason to say, The

Lord hath done all things well; mercy and peace go before him continually. Afflictions are sent for our profit; and if we do not profit by them, the fault is entirely our own. They are designed to convince us of the unsatisfying and fleeting nature of all things beneath the sun. We should not, therefore, when they are upon us, indulge the sorrow of the world which worketh death; but pray that they may be made to work in us the peaceable fruit of righteousness, and, in the future world, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we are "pilgrims and strangers" in this valley of tears, we must constantly meet with sorrows and troubles, which nothing but religion can enable us to sustain. This then, religion, is the hidden treasure, the pearl of great price, to obtain which we should sell all that we have. This it is that affords happiness in life; this it is that smoothes and softens the pillow of death; this it is that leads its disciples to a heaven of unclouded day. My dear N., do we possess this treasure? Important question! involving joys and sorrows inconceivable and eternal. If we do not, let us without delay draw near to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy. There is a glorious Mediator between God and man. And He whom we have offended says to us, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find."

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Killingworth, July 23, 1808.

Your letter, my ever dear M., has just been handed me, and has afforded me great pleasure. It convinced me that I was not forgotten by one whom I tenderly love; and, at the same time that it assured me of your friendship, conveyed to my heart a degree of consolation which I greatly needed, and which the divine truths it contained, are so well calculated to inspire.

We are subject to a thousand weaknesses, the natural attendants of frail humanity: it is not strange, therefore, that we should sometimes feel oppressed with doubts and fears. Indeed a certain religious author says, "The soul that never doubted, hath never yet believed: for while flesh remains in the believer, it is unbelieving flesh; and it is the office of faith to subdue this unbelief in all its activities." There are, it appears to me, two kinds of doubt respecting our spiritual state, to which we are subject One is a distrust of God's omnipotence, mercy, willingness to save, &c., something like that which we should suppose the Apostles felt, when they exclaimed with astonishment, "Who then can be saved?" The other proceeds from a consciousness of weakness, sin, want of faith, &c., in ourselves. I do not think that my doubts are occasioned by any distrust of the blessed God! Oh! no, God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked; else why did he give his Son to be a ransom for sinners? why does he run to meet the returning prodigal, while yet a great way off? why does he continue to hold out to us the sceptre of his mercy, when we are practically saying to him, We desire not the knowledge of thy ways? That God is love, is evinced by every thing around us, as well as by the declarations of his word. He is able and willing to save, to the uttermost, all, who come unto him with faith in the merits of his Son. The difficulty seems to be entirely in myself. I am so cold and lifeless, so faithless and unbelieving, that it seems to be almost impossible that I should be allied to any thing good. Do not infer from this last remark that I am very humble. I ought to be humbled in the very dust, but I am far less abased before God than I feel that I should be. How far am I from that fervor of spirit in serving the Lord, and that deadness to the world, that watchfulness and zeal, which I ought to have, and which I long to possess! My dear M., it is a great thing to be a Christian at any time, especially in these last days, when iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold; when "the declensions of Christianity" may be produced as "a sad argument of its truth." But it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure; and to him the work is as easy now as at any other period. Were the whole world around us faithful disciples of Christ, there would still be a law in our members, over which God alone could give us the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In such circumstances, however, there would be fewer temptations, and it would be easier to maintain a close walk with God. Nothing short of omnipotence can, indeed, cause light to shine out of darkness. But the greatness of the work should not cause our hearts to sink in despondency. No work is too great for God to perform; and he has promised to help those who trust in him, and to give them all that they ask agreeably to his will. Despondency must then arise from want of faith. This it was in Peter, which impelled him to exclaim, "Lord, save me, I perish!" He did not fully trust in the power of his divine Master, but yielded to fear, excited by the rough appearance of the waves on which he stood; forgetting that He, whom the winds and the sea obey, was at his side. This it is in us—the want of faith, that leads us to doubt whether we can ever be saved. The Lord increase our faith, and give us unwavering confidence in his faithfulness and mercy.

TO THE SAME.

Killingworth, Sept. 21, 1808.

In writing to you, my dear M., I shall, with a confidence which our friendship justifies, throw away all unnecessary reserve, and use the freedom of a friend and sister. In communicating every incident which is interesting to me, and seeking in you, when I am in trouble, that sympathy and consolation which I hope to find in one whose mind is so congenial with my own, I shall enjoy your society, though I am separated from you. And in such correspondence—which it is my wish may be maintained between us while life shall last—we shall find much pleasure, and, I hope, some profit. When I go to Boston, I do not expect to have any regular correspondent but you; as other necessary and unavoidable engagements will, probably, prevent my retaining more than one. I shall therefore wish you to write me frequently, that we may not cease to hink of and love each other.

I do not question the correctness of Mr. S.'s explanation of Christian humility, nor of the remarks he connected with it respecting doubts, &c. But do you think that continual doubts in a regenerate person, are as conducive to God's glory as a stronger faith would be? I know that as long as sin remains, there will probably be seasons of comparative darkness; and therefore, some degree of doubt is consistent with the Christian character. Yet I believe that could we always have faith to say with the apostle, "I know in whom I have believed," we should glorify God much more than we do now.

I received a letter last week from Gen. Huntington. He informs me of the melancholy death of his daughter-in-law, at N., of whom you have heard me speak in terms of affection and admiration. She was one of the excellent of the earth; an ornament to her sex, and to the religion of Christ. Her usefulness here is now at an end. God had prepared her for glory, and he has taken her to himself. In the midst of life we are in death. Oh! that we, my dear M., would learn to consider ourselves as pilgrims and strangers on the earth, and to live with a constant reference to eternity; that when the solemn hour of death shall come, we may

> Look back on every sorrow past,
> And meet life's peaceful evening with a smile.

TO MR. D., OF ——.

Killingworth, November 22, 1808.

The friendship which you feel for us all, and which we all feel for you, rendered any apology, in regard to your commencing a correspondence with me needless. I hope ever to consider you as one of my friends; and, as such, your letter could excite no other sensations than those of pleasure.

The silence which you preserved while here, upon the subject of our beloved Eliza's death,* I did not impute either to indifference or insensibility. You knew her too well, to suffer the remembrance of her virtues to depart from your mind, as she departed from the theatre of life. And you are not possessed of that stoicism of feeling, which would preclude your being interested in the afflictions of your friends. I rather imputed it to a reluctance to open afresh those wounds, in the bosoms of the members of this family, which can never be entirely healed, by recalling to our memories the recollection of one of our number whom God has taken from us. She was all that was amiable and lovely; and none can realize our loss, but those who knew her as we did. Could I not feel that there is indeed a God that judgeth in the earth, and that though clouds and darkness are often round about him, yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and did I not believe that he orders every thing for his own glory, and the highest good of his intelligent creation, I should at times be ready to sink under his chastising hand. But the persuasion that the Lord reigneth in perfect righteousness, is not my only source of consolation under this trial; for I have reason to hope that my dear sister died in peace, and has entered into that rest which remaineth for the people of God. In this view, death seems disarmed of his sting, and I sometimes feel disposed to bless the Lord for having released her from sin, and every attending sorrow, and admitted her to the full enjoyment of himself. Dear departed Eliza! Thy journey was short; but thou hast arrived at the haven of felicity, and God has wiped all tears from thine eyes.

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* The person whose death is here referred to, was her sister, Mrs. Eliza Olcott, of Killingworth.

The various inquiries you proposed, need more time and wisdom than I possess, fully and properly to answer. Those which more immediately interest yourself, excite, in a peculiar degree, my attention. I suppose you consider yourself, as to be ranked among the sixth class of undecided characters mentioned in your letter, which you have described as "being necessitated to halt between two opinions, from a half persuasion that they are right, while opposed in their plans by the opinions and wishes of friends, &c." This is certainly a very unpleasant situation, and I am sincerely sorry it is yours; because, when we are undecided in our own minds respecting any particular pursuit, there is less prospect of usefulness and happiness in life, than there would otherwise be, on account of our being, by this means, prevented from properly exerting our powers, and as it also prevents or clouds that approbation of our own hearts, founded on the firm persuasion that we are good soldiers, in a good cause, which is as an anchor to the soul. I wish it were in my power to give you all that advice which you desire from your friends, and to direct your mind to the course of duty and of happiness. I would direct you to that divine book which contains directions for all, given by ONE who cannot misguide; directions which, if followed, will conduct to usefulness and happiness, both here and hereafter. Seek from the fountain of grace, wisdom profitable to direct, and grace to help; and be assured, you will not seek in vain.

You say, it has a long time been your desire to preach the gospel, and that, though at times a sense of your unworthiness leads you almost to relinquish this your darling object, yet you feel that, by relinquishing it, you should give up also all your hopes of earthly happiness. If this is the case, if you also feel this pursuit your duty, if you indeed desire to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified, and if you ardently long to glorify God and benefit the souls of men, I certainly think you ought to enter the ministry. Your distrust of yourself is no ground for discouragement. On the contrary, if you did not feel your weakness and unworthiness, you would have reason to doubt whether you had ever seen your true character, as delineated in the scriptures of truth. Grace operates by subduing the pride of man. Renounce all dependence on yourself. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might: and you need not fear.

With regard to the subject of Episcopacy, which seems to engross too much of your attention, I think myself qualified to say but little. I have never entered into the spirit of the controversy, and have but little information on the subject. I would refer you to Dr. Mason,* Dr. Miller,† and others, who have written, so far as I am informed, ably and scripturally, upon the topics in debate between the Presbyterians‡ and Episcopalians.

You think you can do more good as an Episcopal minister. Why? You must give some reason for supposing so, or you will fall under the appellation "romantic," according to Foster. What leads you to think you can do more good in the Episcopal church? Is it that Episcopal ministers are generally more successful in winning souls to Christ than Presbyterian ministers? Or do you think that if you enter that church, you will exceed other ministers, in both churches, so far as to be peculiarly blessed? Indeed, my friend, I would not damp your zeal, or cloud your prospects of usefulness. I hope you may be blessed of God, and turn many to righteousness. But I believe, judging from facts and the promises of scripture to all faithful heralds of the cross, that you may be as useful a minister in the Presbyterian as in the Episcopal church.

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* Articles in the Christian Magazine, on Episcopacy.

† Letters concerning the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry.

‡ In Connecticut the Congregationalists are usually called Presbyterians.

Are the doctrines which Episcopalians, in this region, usually embrace, more scriptural than those held by the Presbyterians?

That baptism is not regeneration, appears to me so plain, from the scriptures and the best observation of the world around us, as to need no other demonstration. If it be, I do not see that any can be saved, but those who have been baptized; for our Savior explicitly affirms, that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." And can you adopt a sentiment which leads to such a conclusion?

You seem, however, rather to suppose that regeneration may be regarded, as always accompanying baptism, when the subject is presented in the proper spirit. If parents give up their children in this ordinance in faith, you appear to think, they may be, uniformly, regenerated. But who had worse children than Eli and David? And yet they were both holy men, and no doubt gave up their children to God in faith in the ordinance of circumcision. And do we not sometimes see the best parents, who, we cannot doubt, have, in faith dedicated their offspring to God, and by both precept and example taught them the way of righteousness, afflicted with children who are utter strangers to the power of divine grace? If this be the case, we must either condemn such parents as hypocrites or conclude that the opinion in question is erroneous. With regard to that expression of our Lord in his conversation with Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit," &c. it is I think evident, for the reasons just stated, that the phrase "born of water" does not mean baptism. Mr. Henry, author of the Commentary, thinks that water is used in this place figuratively, to express the cleansing or purifying effect of the saving influences of the Spirit. "The washing of regeneration" and "baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire," are, in his opinion, phrases synonymous with this. But I have heard it objected, "In saying that baptism is not regeneration, you depreciate its worth, and render it of little or no use." By no means. Its not being a converting ordinance, is no reason why we should consider it useless and of no efficacy. Conversion is not immediately and inseparably connected with reading the Scriptures, and attending public worship: but they are not, on that account, to be regarded as of no use. They are means of grace, and those who do not use them, will, most probably, never be converted. Baptism initiates the subject into the visible Church of Christ, and implies the most solemn engagements on the part of the parents, to train up their child in the way he should go; and, if they faithfully fulfil their engagements, there is reason to hope that when he is old he will not depart from it. If baptism is regeneration, Christ's exhortation "strive to enter in at the strait gate," &c. was unnecessary, for the road to life is so broad and easy of access that few can miss it.

That the faith which was not followed by good works, is of no avail, I readily allow: or, to speak more properly, if good works do not appear, there is no faith at all, the soul is unregenerate. Nevertheless, neither our faith, nor our good works, constitute, or make a part of, the ground or meritorious cause of our acceptance with God. It is certain that we cannot be saved without faith, for the Scripture saith, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Yet it is not our faith, as a virtue in us, which procures for us the complacent regard of Jehovah; but the merits of Christ, in which we become interested by faith. "Being," says the apostle, "justified *freely*"—without any merit on our part, "by his grace, *through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" And the reason of this is obvious. Our faith can have no merit in it, because it is the gift of God. "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the *gift* of God."

The subject of the decrees of God, is one upon which I have never thought it profitable for me to speculate. "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: the things which are revealed belong unto us." I have reason to blush that my mind is so enveloped in the shades of ignorance and unbelief, in regard to this and every other doctrine of the Bible. That "God did, out of his mere good pleasure, from all eternity, elect some to everlasting life," I firmly believe, because it appears to me to be plainly taught in the Scriptures. But that this election destroys, or at all interferes with, the free-agency of man, I do not believe. It is my opinion that salvation by Jesus Christ should be preached indiscriminately to all, that all have the sincere offers of mercy, and therefore, that those who come short of salvation, must take all the blame of their destruction to themselves, while those who are saved, must ascribe it wholly to the riches of sovereign grace. And is there any inconsistency in this? Because "God hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass," are we to conclude that all efforts on our part to repent and believe are unnecessary; and that we are excusable in neglecting the means of grace? The Scriptures assure us, and we believe, that there is "an appointed time for man upon the earth," that "his days are determined, and the number of his months are with God," and that " he hath appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." But this does not prevent us, when we are sick, from using proper medicines for the recovery of health. We do not say, "I will do nothing; if I am to die, I shall die, at any rate; if not, I shall live, though I use no means for the preservation of life." This, all admit, would be an absurd way of reasoning. But is it not equally absurd, to reason in the same manner with regard to our eternal concerns ?

I believe we are naturally in a state of enmity to God, entirely depraved, "dead in trespasses and sins." Yet I do not believe that we are in such a sense unable to repent, believe in Christ, and love God, that we are in the least degree excusable for disobeying the divine commands which require us to do these things. The best Calvinistic writers, such as President Edwards, Andrew Fuller, &c. make a distinction between what they call natural and moral inability to obey the commands of God. "If it were not the duty of unconverted sinners to believe in Christ, and that because of their inability; this inability must be natural, or something which does not arise from an evil disposition; but all the inability ascribed to man, with respect to believing, arises from the aversion of his heart." Consequently, it is the duty of the sinner to believe in Christ; and it is altogether owing to his disinclination that he does not, as is evident from many passages of Scripture, such as "Ye *will* not come to me that ye might have life." "We *desire* not the knowledge of thy ways." "Men *love* darkness rather than light." "Surely," says Mr. Fuller, "the plainest and weakest Christian, in reading his Bible, if he pay any regard to what he reads, must perceive a manifest difference between the blindness of Bartimeus, who was ardently desirous that he might receive his sight, and that of the unbelieving Jews, who closed their eyes, lest they should see, and be converted, and healed; and between the want of the natural sense of hearing, and the state of those who have ears, but hear not."

The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints I also believe, because I think it is plainly taught in the Bible. That many profess religion who never felt it, that many deceive themselves and others by a false show, and that many go considerable lengths in the external practice of the precepts, and acquire a considerable speculative knowledge and belief of the doctrines of the gospel, and that these frequently fall away from all which they ever did profess and believe, I have no doubt. And if the perseverance of true believers depended upon themselves, none would persevere. But it does not depend upon themselves. "In the Lord have they righteousness and strength." They build upon that "sure foundation stone which can never be moved." They trust in Him who says to his people, "I will never leave nor forsake you." And, saith the apostle, "God is true. All the promises of God in Christ Jesus are yea and amen." In another place he says, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And what were his reasons for this persuasion? Did it proceed from confidence in himself? No. "We are more than conquerors," says he, "through Him that loved us." To "the saints in Christ Jesus which were at Philippi," he says, I am "confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." And the Savior says that his "sheep"—those that "hear his voice," "shall never perish," and that he will "give unto them eternal life." To believe that any who have been truly regenerated, will totally fall away and perish, would, therefore, in my view, be to impeach the faithfulness of God.

Some have thought that the belief of this doctrine is calculated to make us remiss in the performance of duty, that it tends to make us relax our exertions to live near to God, and to glorify him by a life of devotedness to his service. The speculative belief of it may, indeed, produce this effect upon the formalist and the hypocrite; but the belief of it with the heart will have no such influence upon the real Christian. And the reason is this; the former performs all his duties, solely because he feels that he must perform them to get to heaven, while the latter endeavors to be faithful, chiefly because he loves the service of God for its own sake. The former is entirely actuated by selfish principles; the latter, though he values the welfare of his soul, is principally actuated by a regard to the glory of God. The consequence is, that the former, when he thinks he is safe, omits or slightly performs duties, which he never loved, because he has no further use for them, as his own end is, he thinks, accomplished; whereas the latter performs them still, though he has attained the assurance of hope, not as a duty only, but as a pleasure. His confidence of being personally interested in that covenant which is ordered in all things and sure, makes him, if possible, more desirous, than he was before he attained to such a measure of grace, to glorify, by a well ordered life and conversation, that God, the breadth and length and depth and height of whose love for his soul, he finds, pass his knowledge. The saints in heaven know assuredly that they shall never fall from grace; but this does not damp the ardor of their love and zeal. This very knowledge increases the rapture, with which they give glory to Him who redeemed them unto God by his blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.

Were I not writing to a friend, and had you not requested my opinion upon the several subjects mentioned in your letter, I should consider some apology necessary for the character and length of this reply. In the present case, however, it is unnecessary.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Killingworth, December 20, 1808.

I have been reading Foster's Essays. I admire them greatly. You recollect, I presume, what he says respecting romantic friendship. I fear his remarks are too true. He is certainly a man of great discernment, and has an extensive knowledge of human nature. I was surprised to observe with what facility he makes the minutest events in nature subservient to the design of his work; and how, even those circumstances or occurrences of life which we should judge of no importance, are, by him, recorded with an accuracy of recollection which we admire, and an energy of expression which makes them more fully illustrate his ideas than, perhaps, any thing else could have done. The essay on Decision of Character is an admirably well executed piece; and, were the world more virtuous, we should rejoice in its principles being instilled into every breast. Ardor and invincibility in a good cause, would be the source of numberless blessings to the world. But when we consider the depraved state of the minds and morals of men, I think we have reason to bless the benevolent Parent of the universe, that he has not endowed a greater number of individuals with this fixedness of determination in any favorite pursuit; as from it, when not controlled by virtuous principle, must result innumerable and unheard of dangers and distresses. Were it probable that, with all this inflexibility of temper, the influential motives which prompted the execution of any design would be good; and that the heart which was the subject of this firmness and decision, would be capable of that refinement, humanity, and deference to the opinions of others, which characterize beings of a more flexible stamp; we might wish every person in possession of it; as virtue and the good of all mankind, would be the ultimate object to which all its energies would be directed. These, however, Foster himself acknowledges, are rarely united; and he regrets that almost all the examples of decision which he mentions, are among the cruel and tyrannical part of mankind. The reason, you recollect, which he assigns for it is, that a man of a decided character will, almost unavoidably, become indifferent to the opinions and advice of others; or, from a consciousness of possessing superior talents, consider himself as having an almost exclusive right of judging, and therefore, condemn all opinions which do not exactly coincide with his. Such a man would, I should think, become a cynic or misanthrope, a torture to himself, and a source of misery to his friends; more especially, if he had not some great object in view, to employ his time and attention; or, most of all, if his schemes should, in the end, disappoint his expectations.

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Killingworth, January 20, 1809.

The subject of your letter, my dear friend, is one of infinite importance, and certainly claims our first and most earnest attention. Could we realize the tremendous consequences connected with it, we should, I think, cease to view it with so much supineness and indifference, and give it that careful consideration which it deserves. When we reflect that, upon our possessing real religion, depends our happiness, both for time and eternity, that the least mistake may be productive of evils, the nature and extent of which exceed our powers of conception, and that this religion must be diligently sought for, before it can be obtained; we must surely, unless our hearts are totally blinded by sin, and harder than the nether mill-stone, be excited to exclaim, with sincerity and earnestness, What must I do to be saved? It is a small thing to profess Christianity, to acquire a theoretical knowledge of its doctrines, to speak of its nature and excellence, and, in a pharisaical manner, to mould our external behavior to its precepts; to do all this is but a small thing; but when done, if unaccompanied with that grace of God which is like a refiner's fire or the fuller's soap, it is but washing the outside of the cup and platter, while inwardly we are full of corruption. The work of sanctification is a great work, which nothing but the mighty power of God can accomplish, for who but he can bring a clean thing out of an unclean, and release the creature, sold under sin, from his bondage to Satan, when he is himself opposed to his deliverance, and bring him into the glorious liberty of the sons of God? But great as is the work, and diverse as it is from any thing which men or devils can effect, it is nevertheless one which Satan and the corruptions of our own hearts use all their efforts to counterfeit. The adversary, we are told, can "transform himself into an angel of light," and "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." On these two affecting and alarming truths, is reared that strong delusion by which so many are led blindfold to eternal despair. How necessary then is it that we should, frequently and carefully examine ourselves whether we be in the faith? My dear M., when looking into this heart of mine, and finding so many sinful propensities existing and operating within it, I am sometimes led to fear, almost to conclude, that I have never yet been renewed in the spirit of my mind. Oh! the infinite consequences depending upon our embracing, from the heart, that religion, and being the subjects of that repentance and faith, without which we shall not be saved! I cannot, even to you, fully express my feelings on this interesting and all important subject; it is too vast and solemn in its nature and consequences. I can only say, Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting. I do think, however, notwithstanding the many reasons I have to entertain doubts respecting my conversion, that Christianity is to me all in all. Were the religion of Jesus torn from me, I should be like the mariner without a compass or a bark, in the midst of a tempestuous ocean. I should not know whether to direct my despairing eyes, for hope in this life, or happiness in the life to come. Sometimes I have a hope that I am one of Christ's little ones, and feel as if I could exclaim with the Psalmist, O how I love thy law. But these precious seasons do not last long, and I again doubt, whether the joys I then felt, were not the fruit of those false affections which the legalist and the hypocrite may experience. My dear friend, let us pray for each other, that we may have faith to lay hold on the promises of Jehovah, that we may be enabled to hold on our way in the path of life, and finally be made pillars in the temple of our God, to go no more out for ever.

TO A FRIEND AT N. Y.

Killingworth, February 19, 1809.

What, my dear N., would be our sensations did we suppose, like many learned infidels, that this narrow sphere of being was the whole of our existence? Dreadful indeed would be the thought; that man was destined only to tread, for a few short days, this speck of creation, and then sink to nought! What could ever have induced cultivated and aspiring minds, to imbibe notions so degrading to our nature as these; notions which make us but a little higher than the beasts that perish, and which preclude all desires and exertions for nobler joys than those of time and sense? Futurity is the Christian's hope. In the Gospel, life and immortality are brought to light. Death shall be swallowed up of victory. Then grace shall be perfected, and glory consummated. Then shall we know even as we are known; whatever appeared mysterious and incomprehensible to our finite capacities, shall be elucidated; God will be seen to have done all things well, and to be just in justifying them that believe.

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Killingworth, March 31, 1809.

I received your kind letter, my beloved M., with the most cordial pleasure. It is sometime since I heard from my good friends at N. H.; and I hope I feel sensations of gratitude to Him who is the giver of every good and perfect gift, that he has preserved you from sickness and death until the present time, and that he has not withdrawn the precious influences of his Spirit, but is still causing the showers of divine grace to descend upon your favored town. May the glorious work be continued, until your righteousness shall go forth as brightness, and your salvation as a lamp that burneth.

It is certainly true, my dear friend, that frequently, when there is an uncommon attention to religion, there is also an uncommon zeal in defending or opposing things unessential. That the Christian world is so divided in its opinions, is a circumstance which must excite sorrow in the bosom of every member of the family of God. But so long as human nature is subject to err, and as long as there are different doctrines taught by those who undertake to expound the Scriptures of truth, this must unavoidably be the case. We are not to condemn any, who differ from us in some points of faith, but hold to the fundamental doctrines of

Christianity. A proceeding so uncharitable, has no sanction in the benevolent and perfect rules of the Gospel. That the best men are liable to embrace, and have embraced errors, is amply evident from the least acquaintance with ecclesiastical history. This fact, together with the numerous exhortations in scripture to the exercise of charity, should lead us to view with candor and impartiality the opinions of others, to examine them faithfully before we condemn them, and if we must condemn them because we find them to be fundamental errors, to do it in the meekness of the christian temper. Yet, as I have already intimated, while we endeavor to avoid unjust and uncharitable censure of others for their religious opinions, we must be careful not to sacrifice at the shrine of modern 'liberality' the faith once delivered to the saints; we must not sanction, even by our silence, principles subversive of the great truths inculcated by Christ and his prophets and apostles. There is a manifest difference between those divisions among nominal christians which relate merely to the externals of religion, or to doctrines which do not nearly affect the foundations of the christian faith, and those which are repugnant or contrary to the essential doctrines of the gospel, and which, openly or secretly, aim at the basis of the gospel system. To those who differ from us in relation to the former, we may and ought to extend our fellowship. But errorists of the latter description, should be strenuously opposed, if we would obey the divine injunction to contend earnestly for the faith. We are not indeed to oppose them with severity and acrimony, but with that firmness which arises from a consciousness of being on the Lord's side; a firmness which, while it precludes our being turned about by every wind of doctrine, is accompanied with meekness and discretion. In the primitive church, some were for Paul, others for Apollos, and others for Cephas. And yet they may have all been real disciples of Christ; for Paul, Apollos and Cephas all preached (though with some unimportant variations, which were made the occasion of those divisions,) the same method of salvation; they all preached Christ crucified, the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation to them which believe; and therefore the sincere followers of each were true christians. At the present day also, it is of little consequence whether men are Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, or Baptists; for, although some one of these denominations is doubtless nearer being right than the others, a person may embrace the peculiarities of either, and yet be a christian. But it is of the highest importance whether we be Orthodox, Unitarians, Pelagians, or Antimonians, for the distinctive principles of these sects immediately affect the foundations of Christianity, and must, other things being equal, have a material influence upon the morals of mankind: on the points which separate these classes of, what is loosely called, the christian world, we cannot be too solicitous not to err; for an error here may be fatal. Such, if I understand you, is the distinction which you make. I can therefore yield an entire assent to your remark that "did christians study more to avoid foolish and unprofitable questions, and give more of their attention to the essentials of the gospel, we should see less of the virulence of party spirit and more of the fruits of piety."

How unhappy it is, my dear friend, that the little family of Christ should be so torn with internal animosities and feuds; and that, at a time when the state of the world seems to render it peculiarly necessary, that all its members should be bound together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bonds of peace. At no period in the history of the church, can we discover so many and such powerful efforts of the prince of this world and his adherents to destroy its purity, and its very existence, as at the present time. What were the clamors of the ancient Jews, what were the distressing persecutions of the idolatrous Gentiles, and what were the contemptuous opprobriums of the infidel philosophers of former days, capable of effecting toward the overthrow of Christianity, compared with that spirit of Antichrist which has now gone forth into the world,—a spirit which, while it professes to admire, directs all its energies to the destruction of, the religion of Christ? The former gave the blow openly, the latter gives the deadly stab in secret. The former depressed, but did not corrupt the truth; the latter infuses its poison into the very principles of our faith, and leaves us nothing of Christianity but the form and the name. Surely these are the 'last times' spoken of in the sure word of prophecy, when many shall be given up to strong delusions, and left to believe a lie, and when faith shall hardly be found on the earth.

But thanks be to God, he is showing us, by the effusions of his Spirit on various places, that he still remembers his church, and will not suffer the gates of hell to prevail against it. And blessed be his name for the assurance, that none shall be able to pluck his real children out of the Savior's hands, or prevent his giving unto them eternal life! Oh! my friend, let us pray for each other. And may He, who is the believer's hope, finally present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy!

On the 18th of May, 1809, Miss MANSFIELD was married to the Rev. JOSHUA HUNTINGTON, son of Gen. JEDEDIAH HUNTINGTON, of New-London, Conn., and junior pastor of the Old South Church in Boston, Mass.

The letters, of which the following are extracts, were written after her removal to Boston.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, May 30, 1809.

Our ride was very pleasant. I am delighted with the country around Boston, and think the town is handsomely situated, and I doubt not I shall be pleased with the inhabitants. But, my dear friend, flattering as is the prospect before us, I cannot contemplate the responsibility of the station in which I am placed, its total dissimilarity to that to which I have been accustomed, and the arduous duties resulting from it, together with my own inability to perform them as I ought, without feeling a degree of anxiety lest I should be found wholly unqualified for the situation. Did I not believe that the bounds of our habitations are not accidental, but determined by the providence of God, I should sink under the weight of responsibility which now rests upon me. But I do believe that the Lord has placed me here; he it is who calls me to the arduous duties in which I am now to engage, and I desire, I think I feel in some degree enabled, to trust in him for wisdom and strength to guide and sustain me.

I have as yet seen but few of Mr. H.'s congregation. But, if I may form a judgment from those who have called, I think I shall find among them many who cherish an ardent attachment to the doctrines, and maintain a consistent practice of the duties of the gospel, unmoved by the prevalence of error,—many real disciples of the blessed Jesus. I do not doubt, therefore, but I shall be happy; for it is chiefly the society which renders a place agreeable or unpleasant.

TO ANOTHER SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. L.

Boston, July 20, 1809.

You are already acquainted with Boston and some of its inhabitants, together with my feelings respecting them, and have been informed that I am pleased and contented in my situation. The town is pleasant, the people hospitable and friendly; and could I feel as much complacency in myself as I do in some of them, I should be very happy. But you know, my dear E. that to be sensible of our deficiencies, is one step taken towards their removal. I do feel that mine are many and great. May I not rest satisfied with merely acknowledging, but strive, and be enabled to amend them.

There are a few here (as is generally the case where impiety or error prevails, if there are any righteous found there,) who appear to be decided in their attachment to real religion, and strenuous in its support, uninfluenced by the opposition or the flatteries of the contemners and perverters of the faith. Dr. G. has frequently preached in town of late. I have strong hopes that much good will result from his exertions, and those of other clergymen who are laboring to promote the cause of truth. It is melancholy to see people disputing about that gospel, which was designed to produce nothing but peace on earth. But I believe that the overruling providence of God frequently causes the most salutary effects to arise from religious controversy. Truth never suffers by investigation; and it is evidently better to hear people inquiring what is truth, than quietly embracing error, without endeavoring to ascertain whether they are right or not.

In July of this year, Mrs. Huntington made a visit to her parents. While with them, she wrote several letters to her friends in different parts of the country.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. L.

Killingworth, August 1, 1809.

It is a week to-day, my dear E., since I bade adieu to your pleasant town; and I am the more desirous of taking this early opportunity to write you as I suppose you will be anxious to know whether I reached home in safety. That I left your family with regret, you will not doubt; but that the parting would have been so painful as it was, I could not have imagined. It was justifiable in me to suffer myself to become attached to you; situated as I was, it would have been unpardonable if I had not. But I believe that if we would not suffer our affections to become so ardent as we sometimes do, for those whose society we cannot long enjoy, the separations we must experience in this life, would be far less distressing. Some, however, would say, and perhaps not without reason, this would be the philosophy of a stoic.

Our ride was as pleasant as could be expected, and our sail as agreeable as high and adverse winds would permit, I found our family well, and happy to see me, and my dear little native village appeared very lovely, after my short residence amid the noise and bustle of a giddy metropolis. Did I not believe, with Milton, that the mind is its own place, and in itself can make every circumstance and situation, merely temporal, productive of happiness or misery, and did I not also believe the more consolatory doctrine, that all things and events are under the direction of ONE who cannot err, I should sometimes be almost disposed to sigh for the solitude to which my mind and feelings are so well adapted. But I trust that the situation in which providence has placed me, if it exposes me more to temptation than my former one, will also lead me to more watchfulness and caution; and that I shall be enabled to fill properly that station which is "a call to duty, not a discharge from care."

TO THE SAME.

Killingworth, September 9, 1809.

You will be pleased to hear that the attention to religion in this place rather increases than subsides. New instances of conviction occur almost daily. I trust that this shower of divine grace, which is but just begun, will not cease until it has plentifully watered this dry and thirsty ground. Heaven grant it may not. It is a cause of lamentation, that the christian world is so divided in opinion, and that the religion of Jesus, which is calculated to produce only peace among its disciples, should so often be made, by them, an occasion for animosity and dissension. But so it is, and will be, so long as men are subject to deception, and possess the frailties of fallen humanity. We see, that the world is torn with civil as well as religious dissensions, and that people disagree about every thing else, as well as about religion; and therefore, we know that it is not Christianity which produces the tumults of controversy.

The essential doctrines of the gospel should be earnestly though prudently maintained, for these are the foundation of the christian system; as, for instance the deity and the atonement of Christ, and the entire depravity of the human nature. Take away either of these, and the whole gospel system is levelled with the dust. When pleading for charity, and liberty of conscience, we must be careful not to suffer ourselves to consider *doctrines* as unimportant; for if, as is often said, it is no matter what a man believes, if he is only sincere, we might as well, so far as our prospects for eternity are concerned, be groping in the darkness of Paganism, as sitting under the sunshine of the Gospel. This is a charity of which Christ and his apostles certainly knew nothing; and it is as prejudicial to the cause of religion, as it is absurd in the view of reason. But about *forms*, it appears to me we are by far too fastidious. Faith and repentance are required of us in order to salvation, and these may be experienced in every denomination where the fundamentals of Christianity are received.

The reason, my dear E , of my making these remarks is, that I was thinking how unhappy it is that there is so much disputing here about baptism and communion. The virulence of party spirit is exceedingly apt to eat out the vitals of pure religion; and it pains me to behold many, apparently, more desirous to gain disciples to their own distinctive, but unessential, opinions, than to direct perishing souls to Christ. There is no doubt that some of the various modes of worship are more agreeable to the example of the primitive christians, and the spirit of the New Testament, than others, and it is unquestionably desirable to ascertain and practice those modes. Yet if, by the influence of circumstances, we are led to prefer worshipping God in some of those other ways, I cannot think it is an error for which we shall be condemned. I could wish all christians were united in worshipping Jehovah in the same manner, but I esteem it the *principal thing to worship him in spirit and in truth.*

TO THE SAME.

Killingworth, October 11, 1809.

I received your father's letter last week. The intelligence it contained of the death of your beloved sister, was truly distressing. The consolations of the religion of Christ my dear E., invariably support the mind, if we have faith to apply them to ourselves; and these only can support it, when called to endure trials like yours. Your affliction is indeed great, and your loss no common one. In this light you are allowed to view it. Resignation does not imply insensibility. But still, a sense of the greatness of our loss should never be suffered to produce feelings of dissatisfaction with the dispensations of providence. God has a right to visit us with greater, as well as with less judgments; and it is our duty to be proportionably humbled and improved. If they promote these ends, they are only mercies in a more unpleasant form; for, as has been well remarked, "whatever draws us nearer to God cannot be real adversity, and whatever entices us from him deserves not the name of prosperity." Could we view objects in their proper light, many of those things which now overwhelm us with sorrow would appear desirable.

How happy it is for us that our lot is not at our own disposal. Were it so, I am certain we should be wretched; for the deficiency of our judgments, in connexion with our love of present ease, would lead us to reject those afflictions which, like some unpleasant but salutary medicine, are bitter to the taste, but necessary to existence and health, and to grasp too eagerly those enjoyments, which, if unaccompanied with sanctifying grace, only corrupt and vitiate the mind, and render the possession of them wearisome and the deprivation of them insupportable, and which destroy both the means and the power of attaining true happiness, by drawing us away from Him, without whom we can no more acquire it, than animal life can be supported without breath. Let us always rejoice that God reigns, and that we are entirely at his disposal. How consolatory the thought: for the Judge of all the earth will do right. Let us, my dear sister, by this "awful warning heaven has sent," learn to esteem every thing in this life according to its proper value. Whatever cannot be depended upon, should never be trusted. Let us, therefore, cease to hope for happiness from the evanescent pleasures of life, and fix our eyes and our hearts upon those things which shall survive when heaven and earth have passed away.

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Killingworth, October 16, 1809.

You have, I understand, been disappointed about obtaining Dr. K. This, according to man's judgment appears to be an inauspicious circumstance to your church. But very likely, nay, most assuredly, it is designed to accomplish important purposes, and will be seen to have been productive of good in the end. Perhaps you trusted too much in an arm of flesh, and this is to teach you that all the power is of God, and to lead you to exercise stronger faith in him alone, without whose gracious assistance and blessing, every human effort to advance the Redeemer's kingdom will be ineffectual. It is very desirable that you should obtain a faithful minister, one who will preach the truth in its simplicity, and who will not fear to declare the whole counsel of God. And such an one, I trust, you will obtain. The people of B. have many prayers, and the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much. We believe that you will yet have a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. There are many real Christians in that favored metropolis. But some of them, though they are not dead, are sleeping. How necessary is watchfulness in order to preserve spiritual communion with the sacred Three; without which the Christian cannot be happy, for lukewarmness in religion is as inimical to our enjoyment as it is offensive to God.

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Boston, January 1, 1810.

Through the kindness of providence, I reached this place in safety; and now you doubtless wish to know where and how I am situated. We have been keeping house seven or eight weeks, and as I have for company one to whom the management of a family is familiar, I get along very well. Happiness, I find, is confined to no particular state or place; and I can say with the Psalmist, (I wish it were with the same pious gratitude,) Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life. I also find, as I have always found, that no situation is exempt from trouble; and, while surrounded by blessings which demand my thankful acknowledgments, I see and feel, in myself, and in those about me, numberless evils which excite pain, and should produce humiliation. To the soul which can, with unshaken faith, repose, not only its own cares, but those of others in whom it is interested, on the arm of Him who is mighty to save, and which can view every event, whatever be its nature or effects, as necessary to answer some wise design of providence, nothing can be so distressing as entirely to break its peace.

The truth of this remark is, I think, evinced by the conduct of some Christians in this place, who, though they mourn the sad declension of vital piety here, are filled with joy and confidence in God, and feel that, should the times grow darker and darker, they could still trust in Him who is able to dispel the clouds of ignorance and sin which hang over us, and cause the righteousness of Zion to go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. Nor does the persuasion that, when God sees it most for his glory to pour out his Spirit upon us, he will do it, lead them to indulge in supineness and indifference in requesting it and using the means to obtain it; for they remember that the promise is made to those who ask and knock and seek and strive, and that God has said he will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them. I believe, however, that this high degree of grace is acquired, and retained without interruption, by very few; though it is the duty, and, but for our wickedness, might be the privilege, of all believers to acquire and preserve it.

As to my own feelings in reference to the spiritual condition of the thousands around me, I acknowledge with shame, that they are very different from what they should be. At times, I feel a desire for their salvation, and a conviction that God is not far off. Sometimes I feel almost confident that he will soon cause the glorious rays of the Sun of righteousness to shine upon us, with a power seldom before seen, because the darkness is greater than has commonly been known. At other times I am almost led to ask if the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and cast off his people forever; or I grow unmindful of the alarming situation of the impenitent, and feel little solicitude for the revival of the work of God. And in reference to my own situation, I sometimes feel as if the lines had fallen to me in pleasant places, and think my spiritual privileges greater than ever; and at other times, I almost exclaim, Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, and dwell in the tents of Kedar! I know I am inexcusable for this inconstancy of religious feelings; but you would be less surprised at it, if you saw and heard the different persons I see, the different sermons I hear, and the different conversations I have. At one time I hear a sermon exalting to the pinnacle of praise, human virtue, and the excellence of our nature, and calling upon those to whom it is addressed, to improve those good tendencies which they naturally possess, and which, if cultivated, will lead to holiness and to heaven. At another time I hear a sermon, written with all the energy which the arguments, persuasions and truths of Christianity can give to a discourse,—an energy in the cause of truth which appears almost irresistible. Sometimes I talk with a Christian whose every word breathes faith, humility, and love, and pours into my soul comfort and instruction. Soon after with another professed Christian who will maintain that truths, for which martyrs suffered the loss of all things, even of life, are unimportant. These things perhaps, as I have already remarked, would not affect, so as to destroy his peace and his confidence in God, one who possessed that strong faith which views every thing, moral as well as natural evil, as under the divine direction and control. But, alas! though I know that God reigns, and that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without our Father, I sometimes sink into despondency and unbelief.

When are S. and E. to be married? Dear girls! I hope they will be happy in this state, which must be very happy, or very miserable. I am no advocate for cold esteem only, between those who are to live together, and in so close a connection, through life. But I believe extravagant, misjudged attachment misleads more than that of an opposite character. If the understanding and judgment condemn what the passions only approve, and if this is the substance of the love which is to unite husband and wife, there is great danger of its proving like a fire of dry stubble, which, though it may burn to the skies for the present moment, soon dies away to be enkindled no more.

TO A FRIEND AT N. Y.

Boston, January 14, 1810.

I am happy that you estimate your religious privileges so highly. I believe your remark, that they are equal, if not superior, to those of any other place, is correct; it is unquestionably correct if the comparison extends to other parts of America only. And perhaps there is not another place in the world that has, in proportion to the number of its clergy, so many pious, evangelical and great men among its ministers as N. Y. The inhabitants ought to feel that their mercies are peculiar, and strive, by earnest endeavors, to improve them, to secure their continuance. But, though religious privileges are greater in some places than in others, thanks be to God! they are unspeakably great wherever the Gospel emits its unerring light. With this infallible guide in our hands, and the grace of God in our hearts, there is fear of nothing but remissness in searching out its divine truths, and of embracing errors; not because we have not the means of knowledge, but for the want of a disposition to improve them.

My dear friend, when we think of the various spiritual privileges with which we have been blessed from infancy, with what contrition ought our hearts to be filled that we have gained so little with the talents entrusted to us! I speak of us both, because I am sure my dear N. will not say, 'I am not culpable here,' and though I hope she is far less so than I am, I know we must all consider ourselves as mere cumberers of the ground compared with what we should be. I hope, my beloved friend, we are not entirely blind to the concerns of eternity. I hope God has taught us by his grace that happiness is in him alone; and not only taught us this, but enabled us, through faith in his Son, to lay hold on it for ourselves. This hope is a presumptuous one, like the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish, unless we have those evidences of its genuineness which are mentioned in the scriptures; such as habitual communion with God, daily seeking in faith, from Christ, forgiveness for the past and strength for the future, voluntary denying of ourselves, abstraction from the world, &c. And when I behold in how small a degree these evidences are in myself, I sometimes fear that I am yet without God and without hope in the world. Remembering, therefore, that many come almost to the kingdom of heaven who never enter it, and that there is great danger of our being deceived, let us examine ourselves whether we are indeed in the faith, and strive to make our calling and election sure, lest, when weighed in the balance, we be found wanting.

You ask my opinion of Thornton Abbey. I regret that I am unable to give it. Through some misunderstanding between Mr. Huntington and myself, when I was in Connecticut, each of us thought the other had subscribed for it. It is doubtless a fine work. We may reasonably presume so from its having the recommendation of Andrew Fuller. You have probably seen Cœlebs, the late fashionable work of Miss Hannah More. It has been highly celebrated, and I think justly. Perhaps books of this sort, in which religious sentiments are inculcated under the form of a story, are calculated to do more good to a certain class of society than any other, I mean to those who read merely for amusement. They would fly from any thing exclusively didactic; but, being allured by the fictitious part of a work like this, might read it, and, perhaps, meet with that conviction which, notwithstanding its promises to amuse, it is calculated to produce.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, March 14, 1810.

When the faith of christians meets with much opposition, when they feel that there is no middle ground, that they must with firmness declare for Christ or the world, and resolve to give up God or Mammon, they are apt to live more near to God, and to experience more of the power of divine grace, than when religion is respectable in the estimation of the world. And the reason is obvious; they feel more the necessity of maintaining continual intercourse with Him from whom they know they must derive strength against temptation, and grace to help in time of need. Happy, thrice happy, those on whom opposition produces this blessed effect! Some such christians there are here, who have long stood firm in their attachment to the truth, and in devotedness to the service of Christ.

I have been reading Milner's Church History this winter, and am highly pleased with it. Critics would say Mosheim's is the most learned; but Milner's is far the most evangelical, and will be far more useful, at least, to private christians. When one reads church history, he expects to find a history of *the Church*, and not a tiresome detail of ecclesiastical heresies, wars, and divisions, intermixed with much entirely secular information. Something of this is unavoidable, as heresies have been frequent in the church, and ecclesiastical and profane history are intimately connected; yet the reader's attention should, as often as possible, be directed to the real church, that he may see that there has always been such a church, which he will be very likely to forget, in reading Mosheim and some other church historians.

TO ANOTHER FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, March 16, 1810.

Your situation, my dear friend, is certainly on some accounts, a distressing one. The fear you express, lest you shall be left to depart from Him, under whose banner you have enlisted, by reason of temptation, is a fear which christians, I believe, often feel. When we reflect on the disinclination of our hearts to the pursuit of our highest good, and the opposition to holiness, which remains in them, after its governing power has been destroyed by grace, it should humble us. And when we feel its influence, it may lead us to doubt whether we are in Him who is the true God and eternal life. Yet, let us not be discouraged, for we can do all things through Christ strengthening us.

How prone we are, my dear Miss S., to exclaim with the Patriarch, All these things are against me! when under affliction; and yet every christian will, at last, find, with him, that God meant it for good. If, as is undoubtedly the fact, we are inclined to look to, and be satisfied with, the things which are seen and temporal, and if this disposition is not only our sin, but our misery, then what reason have we to bless God that he has so disposed things that no situation in life is so exempt from troubles, as to make us perfectly contented in it without higher enjoyments? The christian certainly has *reason* to glory in tribulation, for he has the promise of God that all things shall work together for his good. And, consequently, the afflictions he is called to endure, so far from overwhelming him with unavailing distress, should operate as renewed excitements to duty and exertion.

You will be pleased to hear that Mr. Huntington has, of late, been considerably encouraged by the moral appearance of his society. Nothing has occurred deserving the name of a revival; but a spirit of inquiry in some, and of virulent opposition in others, begins to prevail. Opposition to the truth is always to be regretted; but when people are roused to ask what is truth, and are enlightened to see that there is really a great difference between it and error, though some reject, and exhibit their hatred of, the doctrines of scripture, we may hope there will be a more general reception of the truth. The greatest danger lies in men's believing all religions pretty much alike, and those who respectively adopt them, equally acceptable to God, if they are only sincere.

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Boston, November 4, 1810.

I do not approve of people's constantly complaining to others of their hearts; it is, in general, a concern between themselves and God only. But to my dear M., I may speak with freedom. And it is a great comfort that we can sometimes find a friend, to whom we may communicate the enjoyments or discouragements of our spiritual life, whose affection for us forbids our fearing to be betrayed, and whose experience prevents the apprehensions of being misunderstood. Such a friend is my dear M.; and as such, notwithstanding my many doubts concerning myself, I am sure I love her. Should we ever be so happy as finally to arrive at the spiritual Canaan, and be enabled, through Christ, to claim it as our own, we shall look back with astonishment upon the way by which we have been led. And surely a sense of the innumerable dangers which attended our journey, and the capacity we shall then have of discerning the wonderful manner in which God made them all subservient to our progress in holiness, will greatly swell the song, and enhance the enjoyments of victory. Perhaps some of the doubts and discouragements of the christian are of this kind; though painful to be borne, they may, by the overruling mercy of God, be made to accelerate his speed in running the race set before him, and, by showing him the necessity of doing so, cause him to live nearer to God. That my doubts and discouragements may be of this kind, or rather may be thus overruled, (for I know they are to be deprecated, and are highly criminal,) is my earnest prayer.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, December 20, 1810.

I am pleased that your journey to the South has been deferred. But my pleasure in this, as I often fear it is in most other things from which I derive that sensation, is selfish. I anticipate the satisfaction of hearing from you more frequently than if you were at Charleston, and, possibly of seeing you in the spring. You, my kind friend, have been more acquainted with my mental concerns than any one else; and I rejoice that heaven has blessed me with your acquaintance.

I believe there are many of Bunyan's "Ignorances," whose self-deception has its foundation in incorrect apprehensions of Jehovah. They do not realize his infinite abhorrence of all sin; and thus, imagining 'a God all mercy,' they never discover the native opposition of their hearts to his holiness, and consequently never exercise that evangelical repentance, founded upon just views of the malignant nature and destructive tendency of sin, without which, Christ has said, we shall perish. They do not see such a transcendant excellence and beauty in holiness, as to feel that every thing else is, comparatively, of no importance, and that the destitution of it, in a moral agent, deserves an endless punishment.

I wish you, my dear M., to pray that I may have clearer conceptions, soul-transforming conceptions, of the adorable perfections of God. Oh! with what amazing transports of wonder, love, and astonishment, does the view of them fill the angels in heaven, and those, whose minds are enlightened to discern them in this world! Pray that I may see the beauty of holiness, and the deformity of sin without that intercepting veil, which Satan and a depraved nature are so apt to cast over our minds, when we attempt to view them in their true characters.

Oh! for a closer walk with God!
A calm and heavenly frame!
A light to shine upon the road
Which leads me to the Lamb.

Do you not think, my dear M., that we are sometimes blame-worthy in looking with too charitable an eye upon the experiences of others? Is there not reason to fear that at the judgment day, some may rise up and accuse us of having been the means of lulling them to sleep, when the fire of destruction was, even then, in their bosoms? Great caution is necessary, when we attempt to administer consolation. I would rather a friend should be too severely exact with me, than too compassionate. I hope I shall be more cautious myself in future. But we, my beloved friend, I humbly hope, however different our experiences may have been, can unite with the Psalmist in saying, in the sincerity of our souls, Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

Our friend —— is to be married, in a short time, to Mr. —— of ——, whose eminent piety promises her, should God spare their lives, a long succession of happy years. Oh! the importance of religion in order to render the married state a blessing! how important to render any situation in life happy! I bless God that I feel more powerfully than ever my need of it, and think I have more insatiable longings after it. Dear, dear M., what need is there of careful self-examination, to determine whether we possess it or not? How much of our apparent love to God may arise solely from the hope that he will save us? how much from erroneous views of his character? How much of what we consider our repentance,may flow merely from sin's destroying our evidences, and thus taking away our hope, and not from any just apprehension of its malignant nature? How much of our obedience may spring from other causes than a desire to promote the glory of God? How much of our faith may be no more than the faith of devils —unaccompanied with love; and which, if we were only assured of our acceptance with God, would be altogether inoperative and dead?

I think I have heard you say, you were not acquainted with Andrew Fuller's works. I admire them very much. A volume of Essays by him has lately been published in this country. They are, like all of his works, which I have seen, excellent. I have been reading some of President Edwards' sermons lately. I think they are even closer and more searching than his treatise on the affections.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, January 25, 1811.

The loss you have sustained in the death of your brother, is truly great. When you reflect on his amiable disposition, his talents which promised so much, and the favor and affection which he was gaining from all who knew him, you are doubtless almost ready to exclaim, Never was sorrow like my sorrow. Our faith is seldom, if ever, more tried than when we are called to give up those friends, with whose existence our happiness is materially connected. Nor can we, perhaps, have conclusive evidence of its genuineness, till called to pass through the furnace of affliction. The faith of the formalist or the hypocrite, may appear to be sound, as long as God sheds upon him the unclouded sun of prosperity. But if he cause clouds and darkness to overspread his horizon, then he exclaims, The way of the Lord is not equal. It is a proof of true faith, to be able, when all things are against us, to lift a tranquil eye to Him who sits on the throne of the heavens, holding the reins of universal dominion in his hand, and say, Just and true are thy ways, O thou king of saints. This disposition, my dear friend, I trust you feel, though it may be imperfectly. And if so, you may be assured this affliction will work for your good. Nothing deserves the name of adversity which leads us to a more perfect knowledge of, and dependance upon, Him whose favor is life, and whose loving-kindness is better than life; and that the death of friends is designed to have this effect upon christians is undeniable. Therefore, to the christian, afflictions are as truly mercies, as those gifts to which we are apt to appropriate the term.

But, perhaps, you will say, 'I fear I am not a christian.' Dear S., if this is the case, I feel for, and mourn with you. I can do so, for my own mind is often clouded with doubts respecting my spiritual state. Nothing is so distressing as this. Any thing can be borne, if it is tempered and sweetened with the presence and blessing of God. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith," is an injunction of scripture. I dare not, therefore, say, hope without examining; but, my beloved friend, I may say, do not despond. Look not to yourself: look to Christ, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world. None of us need despair, while we have such a mighty and merciful Savior to whom we may repair; who is the Author and the Finisher of faith; who never yet cast off, who never will cast off, any who come to him.

TO A FRIEND AT ——.

Boston, August 15, 1811.

It gives me great pleasure, my dear friend, to learn that you are so well pleased with your new situation, and that your society are so well pleased with you, which I learned from a friend of yours. The approbation of those with whom we are connected is desirable, if it does not interfere with or divert us from duty. Our influence depends upon the opinion others entertain of us; and influence, rightly used, may promote the glory of God and the best interests of men. I have no doubt but my dear —— will improve every advantage she may have from the estimation of her friends, to advance His kingdom and cause, to whose glory our every talent should be devoted. The wife of a clergyman is more narrowly watched than almost any one else. Her deviations from duty are very seldom overlooked; her opinions are minutely examined and often repeated. She is thought to take her notions of things, to a considerable extent, from her husband; and, of course, he suffers, if she is imprudent. When I reflect on the responsibility of this situation, I tremble; and should faint, had not One, whose strength I sometimes feel as if I could lay hold upon, said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

I have nothing particularly pleasing, of a religious nature to communicate. The day of small things we are commanded not to despise, and such is our day. It is matter of great joy when any are hopefully brought to the knowledge of the truth; and we have had several instances of young, thoughtless, pleasure-seeking sinners, laying down the weapons of their rebellion, and enlisting under the banner of Christ. Our lectures and public exercises are better attended than I have ever known them before. The most fixed attention appears on the faces of most of the congregation. God has bestowed the hearing ear; he is equally able to give the understanding heart. Nothing seems to be wanting but that effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous, which availeth much. For myself, I sometimes feel as if my heart was enlarged to pray for the upbuilding of Zion. And when I am lifeless in the duties of personal religion, I feel as if I had some yearnings of soul over Christless sinners. But my heart is deceitful above all things; and I am almost afraid to think I feel, lest I should delude myself. Oh! my dear friend, how infinitely vile and abominable must we appear in the eyes of Him who can fully realize what our feelings in relation to him, to ourselves, and to sin, should be, and knows exactly what they are! Surely we must be stupid if the thought does not cause us to exclaim, It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed! I know nothing in which I am so deficient as in my apprehensions of sin. God grant it may be more and more opened to my view in all its odiousness, and more and more embittered to my soul! I believe the want of clear views of this, the nature and vileness of sin, is the rock on which thousands split. It is the want of this that makes the Arminian think he can save himself, the Unitarian deny the necessity of an atonement and the divinity of the Savior, and the Universalist, the eternity, and perhaps the reality, of future punishment. It is the want of this, that produces those restless replyings against God, which are ever found upon the lips of the unregenerate. And may I not add? it is the want of this, which sometimes clouds, distresses, and agonizes the Christian, when contemplating the tremendous wrath, denounced in Scripture, against the finally impenitent? Oh! how much should professing Christians pray for each other! And when we reflect that there was an unhumbled Judas even among the twelve, how should it excite us to seek, with anxious solicitude, to make our calling and election sure.

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Boston, August 30, 1811.

There is nothing so astonishing, my dear M., nothing that places the thorough, universal, and malignant depravity of our nature in so clear a point of view, as our neglecting to improve the dealings of the blessed God with us, which are all calculated to lead us to repentance, and then finding fault with him for not giving us ability to love him, (when all our inability lies in a criminal aversion, the most unreasonable and unjust, to his perfect character,) and making *that* inability an excuse for not loving him. Oh, could we view this subject as angels view it, and as we shall one day view it, it must fill us with wonder and astonishment,—wonder at the forbearance and mercy of God, astonishment at the moral degradation and turpitude of man. When I look into my own heart, and behold those endless replyings against God which lurk there; when I think what must be the fountain from which they spring; it would seem as if I should be filled with repentance, as if I should mourn, with deep and penitential sorrow, over my unspeakable, my amazing guilt. But still I am freezing with impenitence! The law is holy, and the commandment holy, just, and good; man is bound to comply with it; God must not relax his requirements; if he should, his law would not be strict enough to check the progress and influence of sin; and sin, unrestrained, would soon disorganize his whole moral system, and banish happiness from the universe. This I know and believe; and yet I rebel! Yes, the worm lifts her unrighteous head, and asks, 'What doest thou? and why doest thou thus?' This is what troubles me. I am afraid I have never been brought truly to submit all things to the disposal of God, especially to submit to his righteousness in the condemnation of sinners. I fear I have never yet seen aright the dreadful evil of sin, and that this is the source of the misgivings I sometimes experience, as to its just desert of eternal punishment. But Jehovah *is*, I know he is, righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works; and he has said, that "the wicked shall be turned into hell; where their worm dieth not, and the fire shall never be quenched." Hush, then, every murmuring, doubting thought, every rebellious, discontented feeling! Oh, for deeper views of the vileness, the exceeding vileness of sin, for stronger and more abiding confidence in the rectitude and the goodness of God! Pray for *me*, my dear M., in particular; and pray for false professors, for it is to be feared there are many such.

My mind, I ought to add after what I have said, is generally tranquil. I am comfortable in hope; and this is my hope, that I have received something of the grace of God, and he who has begun the good work, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. I cannot but feel, with the wife of Manoah, that if the Lord had not intended good for me, he would not have shown me all these things.

Is it common for minds to recur, with something like melancholy, to past scenes of a pleasant character? Or is my doing it, owing to a constitutional disposition to attach gloom to every thing? I have tried long and hard to arrive at the true answer to this question. I am inclined to think that the emotion to which I refer, is peculiar to persons whose feelings have more of the sensitive and enthusiastic in them, than those of the rest of the world; and such are mine. This, added to a natural propensity to pensive reflections, will perhaps account for the effect of which I have spoken. Dear M., when I look forward to the trials I may meet with, and realize my own impotence, I feel that, if I am supported, it will be a glorious instance of the power of God's grace to overcome and subdue constitutional infirmities, and bear up the spirit, when every thing seems combined to counteract its influence. I know that extreme sensibility is generally considered an excellence in our sex. But why should we, whose bodily weakness, and necessary trials subject us to a larger portion of misery than men, be led to consider that as amiable, which only relaxes those energies of the mind which will prepare us for suffering? I cannot sufficiently deprecate the influence which such a sentiment may have upon the mind. Women are too generally brought up to think resolution useless, and led, by false notions of delicacy, to glory in their weakness. But the voice of the world changes when circumstances require the exercise of fortitude. Then, the very sensations which before excited pleasure, are considered as indications of weakness and folly. I wish women would endeavor, in all proper ways, to strengthen their more vigorous powers, as reason, judgment, &c., and pay less attention to the cultivation of their imagination, which in most of our sex, has naturally sufficient vigor.

TO A FRIEND AT M.

Boston, September 9, 1811.

I am pleased to learn that your present situation is so agreeable, and your health so good. You have indeed mercies in the midst of judgments, and mercies of a peculiarly delightful kind. Nothing with respect to your departed mother could afford you so much satisfaction as the reflection that she lived not in vain; and that she has only been removed from an inferior station, (where indeed she made it her constant effort to act the part of a good and faithful servant, but where her sphere of action was comparatively contracted, her powers cramped, and her conflicts many,) to one where she can serve God without weariness or imperfection, and constantly witness his approving smile. I am not so much a stranger, my dear E., to the nature of your sorrow, as to suppose that you grieve for her who is gone. You feel that her departure from this world is her gain, though it be your loss. But when you look to yourself, and reflect upon your impotency, your need of counsel, and your exposure to temptation, you feel the want of that friend to whom you have so long been in the habit of going for direction and support; and, though you would not recal her, you cannot forbear to mourn. "It were no virtue," says one, "to bear calamities, if we did not feel them."

The mind which is peculiarly susceptible of impressions, —though I have sometimes thought it needs more grace to enable it to sustain afflictions than one of a different mould, —has, perhaps, some peculiar advantages. In such a mind, if it be a sanctified one, the sense of dependence must be much stronger, and, of course, application to Him whose grace is sufficient in every time of need, more frequent. And whatever leads us to God for strength is a great blessing; for all that is obtained any where else, but from the fulness that is in Christ, is but weakness, however specious its appearance may be. Your feelings are acute, and, on this account, you have a harder struggle; but, for the same reason, you will have a more glorious victory. And He who has wounded, will heal; He who has broken, will bind up. He knows how much to inflict, to accomplish his gracious designs concerning you; and he will lay no more upon you than he will enable you, if you look to him, to bear. Distrust is the sin against which we have more need to be on our guard—I had almost said, than any other. No sin is more offensive to God, none more distressing to ourselves. How glorious, how triumphant would the Christian shine in sufferings, would he, at all times, exercise that unshaken faith which his religion enjoins! His would not be the lifeless calm of the cessation of feeling, but the divine union of those *seeming* contradictions—"sorrowful, yet rejoicing; having nothing, and yet possessing all things!" Let us, my dear friend, endeavor, whether in prosperity or adversity, to cling to the cross of Christ, which possesses a virtue, that will render the one harmless and the other salutary, or rather, that will render both salutary. And remembering each other's weaknesses, let us never forget to commend each other, and the whole Israel of God, to his grace, which is able to carry us through all things unto eternal salvation.

Six persons were admitted to our church yesterday. There seems to be a growing seriousness among us. I cannot but hope that God has a blessing in store for us. The Holy Spirit would have much error and prejudice to overcome in this place. But God has said that the people shall be made willing in the day of his power; and I sometimes have a strong hope that his gracious power will speedily be exerted in this way among this people, and thus obtain for itself great glory. No one, I think, who realizes, in any proper manner, the importance of the salvation of a single soul, can help praying for the upbuilding of Zion. And great things are promised in answer to prayer. If Christians were truly engaged in pleading and laboring for the peace and prosperity of Jerusalem, I am sure that we should see her streets running down with righteousness, and on her walls written inscriptions of praise.

TO A FRIEND AT N. L.

Boston, November 24, 1811.

Your remarks, my dear M., are just; and were letters always, or even generally, the medium of religious communication, I think I may say without arrogance or hypocrisy, I should devote my time to maintaining many correspondences with less regret. Such, I trust, however, will be our correspondence; and therefore, I confidently expect it will prove useful, and that we shall find the time devoted to it, time employed to the best advantage.

The picture you draw of our insensibility to eternal concerns is correct. That awful unbelief which man inherits by the apostasy, is never entirely rooted out of Christians in the present life. Hence, their faith is weak, their gracious affections languid, their obedience imperfect. Could we view the subject of redeeming grace as we shall view it, if we are so happy as to arrive at mount Zion above, it must, it would, make us feel our obligations. But, alas, the sinfulness of our hearts! such a view we shall never obtain, till we have passed the dark valley of death, and left these clogs of clay behind. In the mean while, let us lie low at the footstool, and pray that, at least so much of our natural blindness may be removed, as that we may see that God's love demands more than we can ever pay; and that our natural supineness may be so far overcome, as that we may be giving all diligence to work the work of God, and make our calling and election sure. How much enjoyment do we lose by our inactivity and indifference! What can be more surprising than the conduct of those who, though they know that God is the Fountain of living waters, are continually forsaking him, and hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, which they also know can hold no water? And such is the conduct of most who profess to have been engrafted into Christ by faith!

TO MISS L., OF N. H.

Boston, March 20, 1812.

It will give you pleasure to hear that, for some time before the birth of my child, I enjoyed a degree of spiritual comfort scarcely ever felt before,—not as high overflowings of natural feeling, but a sweet and delightful calm, arising from the consciousness of the infinite integrity, faithfulness, holiness and goodness of God; and that these feelings were continued, for the most part, during my sickness. I am only astonished, and, I hope, grieved, that I love and serve the blessed Jehovah no better. When I reflect on his unbounded goodness to me, who deserve nothing, on the infinite excellence and holiness of his character, and my obligations as a ransomed sinner and a lawful subject, I wonder at myself; I wonder that heart, soul and life, and all, are not unreservedly yielded to Him who deserves more than I can give. Oh, my friend, remember me at the throne of grace. Pray that my soul may not be, as it were, the grave of God's mercies; that I may not be entirely dead in the vineyard of my gracious Lord, who has, as I humbly trust, redeemed me to God by his own precious blood. How sweet a passage is this, "The love of Christ constraineth us, &c."! How desirable to be thus constrained to live, not to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and rose again!

In May of this year Mrs. Huntington commenced a second Journal, which was continued till near the time of her death, and has been preserved.

Her motives in commencing this record of the Lord's dealings with her, are thus stated by herself in an introductory paragraph: "Having of late been impressed with a conviction of the expediency of taking down written memorials of special mercies, I shall, from this time forward, endeavor to do it. My reasons for it are these: 1. The remembrance of mercies will lead me to extol the goodness of God. 2. I shall always have them before me as delightful incitements to duty. 3. Such a remembrance will lead me to trust in God in seasons of doubt and distress. 4. It will ever show me the weakness and wickedness of yielding to despondency, my besetting sin. And, oh! may the record of the gracious dealings of my God ever serve to quicken, enliven, and encourage me, and make me faithful, for Christ's sake. Amen."

In the subsequent part of these Memoirs, extracts will be made from this Journal, and from her Letters, promiscuously, in the order of their respective dates, without any other distinction than the mode of entering them, which will at once indicate to the reader from which they are taken.

The first entry in the Journal is as follows:

May 21, 1812. Deeply impressed with a sense of the vast importance of a mother's duties, and the lasting effect of youthful impressions, I this day resolve to endeavor, at all times, by my precepts and by my example, to inspire my children with just notions of right and wrong, of what is to be avoided and what pursued, of what is sacredly to be desired, and what unreservedly deprecated. And, as my firm opinion is that we are formed to glorify God, and that to enjoy him is our highest happiness, I will endeavor by a life corresponding to this belief, to convince my children that God's glory is my ultimate aim in all that I do, and the enjoyment of him my most ardent desire, my unremitted pursuit, and my unspeakable comfort. I will endeavor, by avoiding all superfluous concern about dress, furniture, worldly accomplishments, &c., not to counteract my precepts, and thus inspire my children with the idea, that what I say I think the highest good, I really view but as a secondary consideration; to act uniformly as if a desire after the one thing needful, was an abiding, influential principle in all my conduct and pursuits. May God give me grace to keep these resolutions!

23. Indulged in many anxious anticipations. Did not sufficiently realize that all is at the disposal of a Being of infinite wisdom, and was therefore careful about many things. Well might the prophet say, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." The doctrines of the holy scriptures are calculated to maintain

the soul in uniform serenity. It is our unbelief that counteracts their influence. Oh! for grace to view futurity as the only consummation of life and happiness, and to see that every thing, however discordant to present gratification, has an ultimate reference to it, that there is a "need be" for all these things, and that the time is coming when every dark providence shall be cleared up, and it shall be made manifest that every event of this mortal state has been necessary, in the great operations of the Director of all things, to perfect the work of redeeming grace! How sweet it will be to trace the blessed concatenation of causes and effects, and give glory to Him who hath in all things made us more than conquerors!

Oh, may I bear some humble part
In that immortal song!
Wonder and joy shall fill my heart,
And love inspire my tongue.

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

New-London, June 8, 1812.

I suppose by this time you wish to know, how and where we are, and whether the children bore the journey well. I am happy to be able to write, that they have both been very good, have made me much less trouble than I anticipated, and are very well. Mr. Huntington thinks himself in better health than when we left home. We have been favored beyond our expectations in the weather, and I trust the country air will soon restore him to usual strength.

I assure you, dear H., a line from Boston would be very acceptable. It is not true that attachments formed in after life are less strong than those imbibed in early youth. Never did I feel my affections more firmly fixed than they are on those objects which have excited them since I have arrived at maturity. My early attachments, however, have always been more ardent than they should be. I was ashamed that I felt so much regret at leaving my eastern friends only for a few weeks. It argued an inordinate love which ought to be resisted. Places would be the same to us, in a great measure, if we kept our eye and our heart fixed on that eternal state, where we shall really begin to live, where we shall be eternally united, where "adieus and farewells are sounds unknown."

TO MRS. W., OF KILLINGWORTH, CONN.

Boston, July 15, 1812.

I need not tell you, my dear sister,* that the melancholy tidings of your beloved husband's death, communicated in my father's letter of the 6th, were very unexpected and distressing. You know too well the peculiar attachment I have always felt for you, to make such a declaration necessary. Yet my feelings constrain me to try to console you, by endeavoring to express how much I feel for you, how tenderly I sympathise with you. Dear S., I feel that human friendships are all insufficient to soothe grief like yours. I can only bid you raise your eye and your heart to Him who has inflicted the wound. Remember that not a sparrow falleth to the ground without his notice; much more then must we feel that man's appointed time is in his hand. And, my dear sister, shall we complain of God? Is not his time the best time? Has he not a right to dispose of his creatures as he sees fit? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? O, yes. Let us bow with submission to his will, and ascribe righteousness to our Maker. I doubt not this solemn providence seems dark and inexplicable; but I conjure you, have no hard thoughts of the blessed Jehovah. All his ways are perfect and merciful. He afflicts, not for his own pleasure, but for our profit. And if, by this mournful dispensation, you are brought to realize that we are probationers for a future state, that this is but a short journey (we know not how short) to an interminable existence; if you are led to prepare for death; if you are made more like God, and more meet for his presence; will you not have reason to rejoice? The desire I have that this end may be answered, is unutterable. Pray, strive, wrestle, that, when it shall come your turn, the awful message may not find you unprepared. God forbid that this should be the case!

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* The lady addressed was a child of the same mother, but not of the same father. Mrs. Mansfield's first husband was the immediate predecessor of Mr. Mansfield in the pastoral office in the first church in Killingworth.

And now, my dear sister, let me once more beg you to cast your burden on the Lord. Do you fear for the little children? "I will preserve them alive," says our merciful God. Do you fear for yourself? "Let your widows trust in me," says the same almighty and gracious being. None ever did, none ever shall, trust in Him, in vain. Go to him and say, "Here am I, Lord! cast down, but not destroyed; hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: subdue, consecrate, and sanctify to thyself, this life, and these members, which have, too long, and too devotedly, been the servants of the world!" Remember your mercies. Many, my dear sister, are left in circumstances of want and wretchedness, as well as of sorrow; but God has mercifully supplied all your temporal necessities. I hope this will find you resigned: free from grief it will not find you, it should not; Jesus wept at Lazarus's grave.

And now I must bid you adieu. Dear sister, you have our sympathy and our prayers. God bless you, and make you one of his dear children; and then *all* things shall work together for your good.

July 22. Yesterday my little son appeared very sick I was awake with him most of the night, and was apprehensive of two disorders, one in consequence of a bad fall, the other the effect of having been exposed to an infectious disease. But, blessed be my gracious Lord, he has disappointed me. Instead of putting the cup of mourning into my hand, he has dissipated all my fears, and caused me to rejoice in his sparing mercy. My heart failed me. I thought I should sink under the affliction of a separation from my child; not because God had not a perfect right to do what he pleased with his own, but from the extreme natural sensibility of my disposition, which is my snare. But I must, I desire to, trust my blessed God; believing that, when I am called to trials of this, or any other kind, he will support me; and if he holds me up, I shall be safe.

25. I have great reason to be humbled before God, for the improper emotions I experienced to-day, on account of the imputation, to my husband, of a certain trifling error, which imputation I thought unjust. I called it, at the time a wound of my feelings; but on reflection I believe it was a wound of my pride. And, what is worse, I fear that,

by yielding to my sinful desire of mentioning it to him, I may have disaffected him towards the offender. May God give me the sorrow I ought to feel, and teach me in lowliness of mind to esteem others better than myself.

August 11. Oh, how miserable I should be, could I not repair to an unchanging God! In Jehovah's love, I find a never-failing spring of comfort. Disappointed in the creature, what should I do without my Almighty friend? And how good is it in him, thus to embitter my earthly cistern, that I may not sit and sip, to my everlasting regret and destruction! It is thy hand, it is thy hand, dear Lord; and I bless thee. Return, therefore, my soul, unto thy only sure rest. Oh God, thou adorable, thou perfect Being, may my spirit spring forward with delight to thy bosom as its resting place, its covert from the storm! And shall I never, never thus fly to thee, but when disappointed, and driven away from the creature? Then come disappointments; come any thing, every thing; and let God be all in all, to my wayward soul!

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, August 20, 1812.

I am not in a mood very well adapted to dissipate or enliven solitude this evening; and I write more to let you know I think of you, than any thing else. I have seen something so like war to-day, that I cannot get rid of the gloom it has thrown over my spirits. A regiment of soldiers, with a large number of baggage-waggons, passed through the streets, just before we went into church this afternoon, on their way to Albany, it is said. The confused noise of fifes and drums, heavy cannon, and loaded waggons, combined with the various sounds of human voices, within four yards of the temple of God, and on his holy day, was new to my ear, and as painful as new. I could not help thinking how many distracted countries are continually witnessing similar, or worse scenes; and my heart almost fainted at the idea of our precious Sabbaths being converted into days of blood-shed and death, and our sacred temples destroyed, or devoted to the promotion of infidelity and wickedness. We have forfeited our Sabbaths, and all our mercies; and it becomes us to take heed to ourselves, and ascribe righteousness to our Maker. I hope you will remember us at the throne of grace, that we may be prepared for all the changes which are in God's right hand, and enabled in every situation to glorify him. May we evermore be found in him who is a covert from the storm, a very present help in time of trouble! May he take us all into his secret chambers, till these calamities are overpast.

TO A FRIEND AT M.

Boston, August 20, 1812.

I am glad you are pleased with Miss ——. She is a remarkable instance of the sovereignty of divine grace; and her experience is, to my mind an argument of no small weight in favor of those views of religion, usually termed evangelical. That the mind of a young person should be led, by the influence of no external cause, to embrace opinions, which she had been taught from infancy to reject as absurd, if not impious, and to which the whole current of her preconceived sentiments, and carnal prejudices was entirely opposed, can be accounted for on no other ground than that she was irresistibly led, in a way she knew not, by him in whose hands are the hearts of all men, and who turneth them as the rivers of water are turned.

You ask me to remember you in my prayers, that you may be kept from falling. I trust, my dear girl, you are founded on the rock Christ Jesus; and if so, you are safe. Christians may, indeed, like Peter, and David, and Thomas, and others, fall into temptations and a snare, and against this, we should continually watch and pray; if left to themselves, they would fall away and perish, and against this they should continually watch and pray: but none shall be able to pluck them out of the hand of Him who has died to redeem them, and pledged himself to raise them up at the last day. No; Christ has prayed for them, that they may be kept in the Father's name; and they may say, Rejoice not over me, O mine enemy, for when I fall, I shall rise again.

It appears to me that the charge of licentiousness, so often alleged against the orthodox, is occasioned by an ungodly world eagerly catching at those slips and falls which are unallowed and adventitious, and which may have been afterwards bewailed, with many a bitter tear, while the aggregate of their conduct is overlooked. It is not the existence, but the indulgence of sin, that proves a professor unsound. It is not a single action, but the habit of conduct that determines the character. While a scoffing world exultingly spread the news of a professor's fall, which he may be lamenting in his closet, with no witness but his eye who looketh on the heart, are they equally solicitous to report his benevolence, his heavenly-mindedness, his disinterestedness, his zeal for God, which may form the leading traits in his character? Ah, no. But they forget that we are as accountable for principles as for actions, for the desire of sin as for the commission of it; and that vicious desires, which we fear to indulge, are infinitely more abominable in the sight of the blessed God, than hatred and unallowed miscarriages. I do not forget that the tree is known by its fruit; and if any sin is so common in a professor, as to have become a habit, it is a dark sign. But these are not the sins of which I have been speaking, nor which are commonly charged upon professors of evangelical religion.

October 2. I have had a very precious exercise this evening, for me. God grant it may prove to have been genuine! I have, for some time past, been in a very worldly, carnal state, and Jehovah graciously chastised me. My trial was, in itself, a small one; but it was hard to be borne. One of my domestics treated me in an unbecoming manner, and when I expostulated with her, only continued to justify herself, and persist in her rudeness. This circumstance led me to realize, how infinitely important it is that I should ever tread in the precise path of duty, and never turn to the right hand or to the left, lest it should bring a reproach on religion. Such a sense of my multiform duties, as a head of a family, and of my entire impotence for their performance, rushed upon me that I was almost overwhelmed. But I was enabled to go to that precious Savior, in whom there is a supply for my every want. I think I was enabled to cast my naked soul upon him for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and final redemption from sin. And oh! what a glorious method for the attainment of strength and faith and grace, did it appear to me; and how hateful did my lukewarmness in his service seem! I only wonder that I was not a thousand times more affected than I was. I think I was enabled to pray for the person who misused me, and to feel all enmity taken away, and a sweet spirit of forgiveness, and a desire that she should be delivered from the bondage of corruption. Indeed, it seemed as if I was filled with love for all the world. Blessed Redeemer! precious, glorious Pattern! enable me to catch something of thy spirit, while sojourning in this vale of tears! And may that spirit and its divine fruits, be consummated in the world of glory!

TO A FRIEND AT P.

Boston, December 29, 1812.

As to progress, dear L., it seems as if there was so much to be known, and so much to be done, that I sometimes feel that I am hardly to regard myself even as a babe in Christ. My knowledge is so imperfect, my faith so unfruitful, my penitence so feeble, and even my desires so languishing, that I sometimes doubt; but, blessed be God, I never despair. He who hath established all the ends of the earth, holds me up; and thus upheld, I am safe. Satan, I know, would rejoice to sift me as wheat, but I think I have committed my soul to him, who will never suffer his people to be tempted above that they are able. You remember the season of conflict I endured about two years and four months ago. Never shall I forget it. Though my distracted spirit was then almost swallowed up with the terrors of the Lord, and an agonizing weight, which may be conceived, but not described, seemed bearing me down to the blackness of darkness forever; yet he, whose province it is to bring good out of evil, appeared for me, and said unto me, 'Live.' Whether I was a Christian then or not, or whether I am one now, I cannot say with certainty, God alone knoweth the heart. But I have a comfortable hope that the Lord has begun, and is carrying on his work in my soul. I think my spiritual perceptions are clearer than they ever were before. The attributes of Jehovah, the extent and reasonableness of the divine law, the equity and wisdom of the divine administration, the plan of redemption, the character of the Savior, &c., are, I think, increasingly known, and increasingly rejoiced in. I remember when I could talk about these things; I dare not say I did not feel them in a degree; but I felt them not as now. This leads me to distrust myself; for if I once thought I felt so much more than I really did, there is reason to fear that I now feel, in no measure proportionably to the worth and importance of divine things. And thus I am driven to the omniscient God, to try me and prove me, to empty me from vessel to vessel, and do with me what seemeth to him good: taking his infallible word, that I shall know, if I follow on to know the Lord. To him be all the glory, now and forever.

TO MISS L., AT CHARLESTON, S. C.

Boston, January 5, 1813.

We are all well; and all things go on well. We only wonder, that mercies so great should not constrain us to unremitted devotedness to the service of him, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. When I think, in particular who it is that has borne up my feet from the way to death, and prevented me from going down to everlasting burnings, and put me, as I humbly hope, in the path of glory, honor and eternal life, it seems as if my ingratitude could be surpassed by nothing, except the forbearance of Him, whom it offends. But though we may rejoice, how much reason have we to rejoice with trembling? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Here is our misery. "I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins." Here is our remedy. And, were it not for this, we might all sit down in despair of ever knowing ourselves. But it is delightful to be able to commit our souls into the hands of ONE, who knows what manner of spirit we are of, and is able to mould us into a conformity to his own glorious image.

I suppose you are obliged in your present situation, to associate more with the gay world than you could wish. But God is able to bring good out of evil. Perhaps the necessity of mixing with the thoughtless and worldly, may teach you to feel more the importance of living near to God, obtaining strength from him, watching unto prayer, lest you fall into temptation, and maintaining good works, than you would do in a less exposed situation. Newton, you remember, thought "the few chosen ones in London, the brightest jewels in the kingdom." No doubt a similar remark may be made with reference to other large towns. I think that a formal spirit of frigid morality among all classes, and an indiscriminate incorporation of such a spirit into the church, when nothing is said against religion, and its professors can scarcely be distinguished from the wood, hay, and stubble around them, is a condition of society much more hostile to the genius of christianity, and its influence on the minds of men, than a state of looser morals on the one hand, and of firmer faith and zeal, and greater spirituality, on the other.

January 22. When I hear females, as I sometimes do, deprecating the contractedness of domestic life, and eagerly panting after the employments and publicity of philosophers, statesmen and legislators, I am led to think that my life, in the little sphere of my family, must be more varied than theirs, or they could not consider the duties of the domestic circle as unimportant, or devoid of excitements. It is true, if the meed to be obtained were mere human applause, the female part of the world would have but little opportunity to shine; and might justly complain of the narrowness of their sphere, and the insignificance of their lot. But when it is considered that the quality of actions is determined by God, and that, in his view, the person who tears from his bosom a right hand sin, or performs a self-denying duty, is greater than the hero or the conqueror, considered only as such; how is the case altered? how does it dignify any station which is calculated to produce these effects? The woman, therefore, who complains of the obscurity of her condition, feels and talks like a heathen. She virtually professes to value the praise of men more than the praise of God; and is likely by her impiety and folly, to forfeit both. In performing the duties of private life, no christian will have reason to complain that he has not sufficient excitement to duty, or sufficiently numerous calls for the use of all his intellectual and moral powers. The various and complicated vexations and trials, pains and sufferings, privations and disappointments, which perpetually occur in the best organized and most favored family, are enough to convince him that there is no time to sleep, that much is to be done, and that he has need of all his strength and wisdom to decide, and resolve, and act. If the end of all that we set ourselves about, ought to be to mend the heart, (and no christian will deny that it ought,) what situation is so favorable for this, as that which teaches the soul what are its besetting sins, and offers no illusive temptations to self-delusion, no poisonous reward to virtues which our consciences tell us are defective at the core? The natural effect of public applause is to produce self-ignorance and deception, for the standard of morals is extremely low and defective in the world; and the popular man will give himself credit for virtues which, either are worthless in the sight of God or he does not possess. How awful, when death shall turn him from the decisions of a world blind and partial, to Him who looketh on the heart! Oh, that in humility of mind, I may ever prefer that condition which leads me to the most intimate knowledge of myself! that I may be enabled to profit by such a knowledge, and rejoice to become nothing that God may be all in all.

February 7. There is scarcely any subject concerning which I feel more anxiety, than the proper education of my children. It is a difficult and delicate subject, and the more I reflect on my duty to them, the more I feel how much is to be learnt by myself. The person who undertakes to form the infant mind, to cut off the distorted shoots, and direct and fashion those which may, in due time, become fruitful and lovely branches, ought to possess a deep and accurate knowledge of human nature. It is no easy task to ascertain, not only the principles and habits of thinking, but also the causes which produce them. It is no easy task, not only to watch over actions, but also to become acquainted with the motives which prompted them. It is no easy task, not only to produce correct associations, but to remove improper ones, which may, through the medium of those nameless occurrences to which children are continually exposed, have found a place in the mind. But such is the task of every mother who superintends the education of her children. Add to this the difficulty of maintaining that uniform and consistent course of conduct which children ought always to observe in their parents, and which alone can give force to the most judicious discipline; and, verily, every considerate person must allow that it is no small matter to be faithful in the employment of instructors of infancy and youth. Not only must the precept be given, Love not the world; but the life must speak the same. Not only must we exhort our infant charge to patience under their little privations and sorrows, but we must also practice those higher exercises of submission which, they will easily perceive, are but the more vigorous branches of the same root, whose feeble twigs they are required to cultivate. Not only must we entreat them to seek first the kingdom of God, but we must be careful to let them see, that we are not as easily depressed by the frowns, or elated by the smiles of the world, as others. In short, nothing but the most persevering industry in the acquisition of necessary knowledge, the most indefatigable application of that knowledge to particular cases, the most decisive adherence to a consistent course of piety, and, above all, the most unremitted supplications to Him who alone can enable us to resolve and act correctly, can qualify us to discharge properly the duties which devolve upon every mother.

March 28. How often do I exclaim with the Psalmist, (would to God it were with his spirit!) "Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" I resolve, and re-resolve, yet live the same. I find myself so often erring on the very point, with respect to which I meant to have been particularly guarded, that I am, sometimes, almost tempted to sit down in despair. Among the greatest of my trials is a natural warmth of disposition, which hurries me on, even in those things which are right in themselves, so that I am not able to proportion my feeling in any proper degree to the importance of the occasion which has excited it. Oh, for grace to judge correctly with regard to the path of duty, and with firmness and fidelity unwaveringly to pursue it!

May 15. How many trials are continually occurring to remind us that this is not our rest! There are a variety of evils which embitter life that do not deserve the name of afflictions; and their end is to induce us to look to that perfect state which is to be revealed. I have this day been wounded in my feelings, by unintentionally wounding the pride of a fellow worm. My remark should not have affected him thus; it was innocent and true. But such is our frailty, and I ought to be neither offended nor surprised. Oh, for that charity which suffereth long and is kind, is not easily provoked, and seeketh not her own! Then would none of these things move me.

21. For a few days past I have felt myself more than usually influenced, by a spirit of vain-glory and pride of human applause, to the performance of right actions. How little disinterestedness of motive am I conscious of possessing? And may not that little be imaginary? I am particularly deficient in humility, that precious grace. Oh, that I might see more of the plague of my own heart, and mourn! But I am ignorant, knowing nothing yet, scarcely, as I ought to know. The next Sabbath our communion season returns; a season when, in times past, I have been particularly guilty, lifeless and cold. Blessed Spirit, take of the things of Christ and shew them unto me, and prepare for him an acceptable offering at my hands!

24. I have not had time till now to record the state of my feelings at the communion yesterday. On Saturday evening I had a very interesting season for preparation, and think I, in some measure, enjoyed it. Sabbath morning I heard a sermon on the personality of the Holy Spirit. It was, as discussed, a delightful subject, and my heart, I trust, felt something of warmth and spirituality. The communion was a very precious season. Though I perhaps felt no more than many Christians generally feel on these occasions, yet it was something for which I desire to be thankful to Him who is the Author and the Finisher of faith. I had not more joy than I have often had when attending that ordinance; but my exercises were more satisfactory than usual. If I am not deceived, I was enabled more sincerely, to renounce every idol, and take Christ for my portion, to renounce my own will and surrender myself to his disposal, than ever I did before. Particularly I desired that my inordinate attachment to my children might be crucified, and my love to God be more supreme; and felt as if I did cast myself on him for the supply of my wants. I felt as if I could go on in the strength of the Lord, and trust in him to carry me through all that is before me. It seemed as if I had some feeble emanations of the same spirit which caused the apostle to exclaim, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might

finish my course with joy." And I think I felt a spirit of love for my fellow professors, and a desire that we all, after having received Christ Jesus the Lord, might walk in him.

June 4. Yesterday I went to the meeting at Mrs. M.'s* as usual, but was in a very stupid frame. I did not feel a sense of the divine presence, or scarcely any desire to seek it. In the night I awoke about two o'clock; and was led, first, to reflect on my insensibility the preceding day; and then on the sufficiency of Christ to atone for my sins, and strengthen me for future duty. I did not have as deep a sense of my guilt as I desired; but I seemed to feel sensibly what I ought to be—that I ought to live for God, that I ought to maintain a constant spirit of prayer, for myself, my children, and this miserable world; and it seemed as if I could get up and go to work, to some purpose, about my master's business. Oh, it is delightful to feel as if the first wish of our hearts was to fulfil the great purpose of our existence, as if we had caught something of the spirit of the heavenly world, and desired principally to be, and do, and suffer, just what God pleases.

I think I scarcely ever saw more fitness in Christ for the peculiar offices he sustains than at this time. It appeared to me as if his having taken our nature upon him, and experienced the weakness of the flesh, rendered him peculiarly fit to be applied to by us for help. He seemed to me indeed a glorious High Priest, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, and therefore able to succor us; who knoweth our frame and is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and therefore willing to afford us all necessary aid.

How little do we know of the glorious truths of the Gospel! How sweet are the faint glimpses of divine things which God sometimes gives us! I think I long to know more, because I know enough to know that all beyond is glorious, glorious. Oh, for some emanations of the divine glory to change me into the same image!

11. I am quite out of spirits this afternoon. I am discouraged, and think I shall never do my duty, and feel as

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* A stated female prayer meeting established in 1741, and continued to the present time. See Memoirs of Mrs. Abigail Waters, by the Rev. Joshua Huntington.

if I am not prepared for the trials which await me. Yet I am surrounded with mercies, and my life ought to be a life of gratitude. My impatience under the gentle rebukes of my heavenly Father, grieves me to the heart, and greatly diminishes my evidence of possessing that faith which works by love. I think I long to do my duty. This body of sin and death is a burden. If sin must dwell in my mortal body, I do pray that it may not reign there, but, like the Canaanites that were left among the children of Israel occasion greater watchfulness, and a deeper sense of dependance on God for better evidence that my sorrow for sin is of a godly sort.

If I knew as much as I ought to know of the evil of sin, how could I ever complain? no afflictions would seem severe. Instead of this impatient, froward spirit, all would be calmness and resignation within. O God! what I know not, teach thou me; and make me satisfied and happy, that I and mine are in thy hand, as the clay is in the hands of the potter. Do not suffer me to murmur, when thou layest thy hand on my earthly gourd, but keep me in the temper of the Psalmist, when he could say, "Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child weaned of his mother." Oh, may I be weaned from all the hopes and pleasures which God sees fit to blight!

12. Sabbath. I heard a sermon this morning from Ps. xvii, 15. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." The topics chiefly dwelt upon, were, the glories of the heavenly state, and the consolations extended to believers by the Gospel, in prospect of a departure from the present world. I reflected that it might, be the last sabbath I should be permitted to spend in the earthly courts of the Most High; and the thought was not attended with those sensations which it sometimes occasions. Formerly the idea of a separation from the body was painful; and I feared I was not sufficiently humbled, to rejoice in being nothing in heaven, that God might be all in all. I was conscious of so much pride, and self-seeking, that it clouded my evidence of meetness for that world, where the loftiest seraph derives his happiness principally from the contemplation and disinterested love of the character and glory of God. Oh that a deceived heart may not

turn me aside, that I cannot deliver my soul! Teach me what I am, Father of lights! lest I perish.

15. I was yesterday morning prevented from spending as much time as usual in private devotion, and was depressed in spirits all day. Every thing looked dark; and I yielded to a superstitious presentment of evil, as far removed from piety as from comfort. I believe the gloomy forebodings we sometimes indulge, dishonor God, as well as distress ourselves, and are a great hindrance in discharging the duties of life. Superstition and religion are at an infinite remove from each other. The one tends to terror, gloom, and despondency; the other to serenity, cheerfulness, and confidence in God. A spirit of bondage is the handmaid of superstition, a spirit of filial love and hope, the handmaid of religion. Satan often fills the soul with a thousand dark and dismal apprehensions, on purpose to destroy its confidence in God and deprive it of peace. Such suggestions ought to be strenuously resisted.

To-day I have been in a happier frame. I had in the morning an uninterrupted and good season for secret prayer; and, as usual, I have experienced the benefit of it through the day. Nothing has a more pernicious influence on my spiritual state, than being deprived of opportunity for private devotion. When I begin the day with God, I am usually strengthened for its duties and trials. How little have I valued, how little improved, my precious privileges, in comparison with what I should have done.

16. Oh that I might groan, being burdened with the load of sin which I constantly carry with me! I have felt not a little impatience in endeavoring to subdue a peevish humor in my child. How little effect can admonition or correction have, when it is not administered in a suitable temper, and accompanied with a proper example. Impatience in the parent, must strengthen, rather than eradicate, fretfulness in the child; for he will easily perceive that you require of him, what you do not practise yourself. I am sometimes almost discouraged. And shall I sit down in despair? Father of mercies, strengthen the poor impotent creature whose only hope is in thee!

21. I was enabled, in secret prayer this morning, to plead, with some degree of fervor, and I hope, in faith, for my dear children. May I be enabled to continue

wrestling mightily with God for them, as one that hath power with him to prevail. May I be enabled to lay up for them a stock of acceptable prayers, to be answering when I am in the dust! Oh that, having been the instrument of their natural, I may be the blessed instrument of their spiritual life! Why were they given me, but that I might train them up for God? This blessed hope sustains and comforts me. What an honor to prepare gems for the Redeemer's crown! And shall my expectations be blighted? God forbid. Oh that every breath might be a breath of prayer! Holy Spirit, quicken my sluggish soul.

22. Nature shrinks at the prospect of suffering. But I can endure all things, if God is with me. In general, I am supported by the persuasion that I have given myself to my Father in heaven, to dispose of me as he sees fit; and I know he will do all things well. If I am called to great trials, I trust he will give me great grace to endure them; if to great duties, great grace to perform them. I think I am principally anxious that I may not be so rebellious as to find fault with his dispensations, but may lie low before my Almighty Sovereign, in a spirit of childlike and loving submission, always exclaiming, Good is the word of the Lord, let him do for me, and by me, and with me, according to his righteous pleasure; only let me not be accounted an enemy, let me not be found opposing the cause of God and the best interests of his kingdom.

If I am not deceived, the character of Jehovah appears to me glorious and lovely. What a sweet delineation of it is given in the 145th Psalm. I think I desire to do more for my Maker and Redeemer than I have heretofore done. I am ashamed of my past life; it has been wasted, wasted. How imperfectly have I answered the great purposes of my existence! What vanities have occupied my time, what bubbles engrossed my pursuit! Oh for grace to *live* while I pretend to live! May the love of Christ henceforth constrain me to walk in newness of life.

28. What have I to say for myself; my gratitude, my improvement? Alas! I find I am the same poor short-coming creature still. On God's part, my soul bears testimony, all is mercy; his promises are sweet; and he is a God at hand, and not afar off. But how treacherous is my heart! how unfruitful my life! Oh for faith more constantly

to hope in God; for grace more to love, better to serve, him! These are not, if I know my own heart, unmeaning phrases. I do, I think, thirst for conformity to God. He is perfectly lovely. God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in their united, and in their distinct characters and offices, appear excellent and glorious; and my poor soul longs to mourn over its unlikeness to their blessed image. Appear for me, O thou hope of my soul.

TO MISS L., AT CHARLESTON, S. C.

Boston, August 5, 1813.

How much do we lose by setting up the Dagon of our own selfish desires, in opposition to the will of God. Dear M., let us wrestle and strive to feel a perfect confidence in the integrity and uprightness of His government, who disposes of all things, according to his sovereign pleasure, not only with regard to the universe at large, but with regard to us individually. It is a blessed exhortation, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding." May our hearts ever respond, Lord, we will trust in thee, for thou art faithfulness and truth, thy throne is established in righteousness; good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way. I fear to say I long to love him, for my desires are so feeble and languid, compared with what they ought to be, that they hardly deserve the name; but I do long to hate the vile, dishonorable ingratitude which prevents my loving him more. Pray for me, that I may not mistake the sparks of my own kindling, for the light of heaven, but that I may be so transformed into the divine likeness, as to be able to say, Truly, O Lord, I am thy servant.

Your letter was a great comfort to me. I trust my dear brother died in the faith and hope of the Gospel. His patience under his severe sufferings, his consciousness of the faint proportion which they bore to the desert of his sins, and the deep interest he took in the eternal welfare of those about him, furnished pleasing evidence that he had been born again. When I learned the favorable state of his mind, it took away the sting of death, and I had not a desire to recal him. On the contrary, it seemed as if the language of my heart ought to be, and in some poor degree was, Bless the Lord, O my soul!

August 5. I have, some days past, been rather weak and debilitated, and, at times, considerably depressed in spirits. Death has appeared distressing to me. I have been too anxious to live. My heart is drawn out in love to my poor fellow worms, who have been the mere instruments by which God has conveyed his mercies to my soul; while my heavenly Benefactor, the source of all I enjoy and all I need, has been forgotten. Oh, my leanness, my leanness!

I think I had some life in prayer this evening, some feelings of satisfaction at being in the hands of God for life and death. I think the employments of heaven seemed sweet to me, and a place at God's right-hand desirable, as a release from this bondage of corruption, under which I desire continually to groan. Thou Searcher of hearts, teach me what I am! And oh! bear up my fainting spirit, amidst all the trials and temptations which beset me, in my journey through the wilderness of this world, so that I may not dishonor thee by impatience, despondency, and unbelief! Dear Savior, I long to see thee with the eye of faith! Unbelief throws her mist over my soul, and I grovel in darkness. Shine into my heart, and give me the light of the knowledge of thy glory!

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

New London, Sept. 2, 1813.

As I know it will be gratifying to you to hear of our welfare, I embrace this early opportunity to inform you of it. The first and second days of our journey, were very unpleasant. On Wednesday night we reached, very much to our satisfaction, the welcome habitation of our parents.

How refreshing is rest after the fatigues of a journey! How comfortable is home after having been wandering, for days, or weeks, among strangers! Could we, my dear H., feel about spiritual, as we do about temporal things, sweet indeed would be the prospect of leaving our earthly house of this tabernacle, and entering into that eternal habitation, that habitation of rest, that remaineth for the people of God!

> Could we but climb where Moses stood,
> And view the landscape o'er,

could we feel that our souls were prepared for the employments and the joys of the heavenly world, how pleasant would be the thought, that the hours which must intervene, before we enter the promised land, are so rapidly passing away! May we, my dear girl, be enabled so to work out our salvation, so to stand like those who wait for the coming of their Lord, as to rejoice, at the end of our course, in an admission to those mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare, in his Father's house, for them that love him. That life is best spent which has continually this end for its object.

October 3. Since last writing in this Journal, [Aug. 5,] I have experienced a variety of changes both in situation and feeling. Soon after that date I went to Bridgewater for my health, and was a good deal cast down, and, I fear, unreconciled to the divine will respecting me. The thought of leaving my husband and children was very distressing. A cloud of darkness hid the divine countenance from my soul, and I walked in the gloom of midnight. One communion season was allowed me while there! but I did not enjoy it; and all the afternoon, I was seeking after an absent God. My mind was greatly distressed. It appeared to me that an idolatrous attachment to the creature, and an extreme desire to live, were the separating sins between God and my soul; and I was afraid that, at the last, I should be found wanting. One great cause of anxiety was, lest, when I should become sick unto death, I should be left to those turns of gloom and despair to which I have been subject from infancy; and thus manifest my want of the graces of faith and love, and bring a reproach upon religion.

Never was there so impotent, so weak a creature as I. Truly I am crushed before the moth. If I ever endure hardness as a good soldier of the cross, all the glory will, plainly, be the Lord's. If I am called to endure affliction, and am not swallowed up with overmuch sorrow, it will evidently be the strength of God alone that sustains me; and I do think I shall not, I cannot, be so ungrateful to forget the merciful and powerful hand that has upheld me. O God, have pity on thy poor worm, who shrinks at the slightest blast; and let thine own power rest upon me! Then indeed shall my infirmity be my glory.

10. I am again called to write in a chamber of sickness. On the 4th, I took a severe cold, and have ever since been confined. My mind was, at first, in a comfortable frame; but on Friday, I felt greatly distressed on account of my rebellious disposition. When in health I think I can say, Thy will be done; but, as soon as there appears to be danger of being called from life, I feel that I am far from the spirit which these words express. One of my domestics has also been taken sick, and obliged to go away. I feel that my chastisements are just. God has been dealing with me for my sins.

I have been deprived of the privilege of attending the communion to-day. I hope to be humbled by it. My gracious Lord, I think, did lead me to plead with him for those spiritual provisions, of which the provisions of his table are the symbols. I think I felt my will more bowed, and a greater desire to relinquish every idol, than at any time before. God grant I may not be deceived! Oh, that I may henceforward live as a pilgrim and a stranger on the earth; that I may not be so dismayed when I have reason to apprehend death may be near! I must be more frequent in the practice of self-examination; a duty I have much neglected, chiefly because I have found it so difficult to perform it without distraction; a fact that should have had just the contrary influence, exciting me to more frequent and strenuous endeavors to perform it aright. O God, lead me into the knowledge of myself, and guide me in the way everlasting!

13. This has been a public day. When I saw the multitudes flocking to see the parade, &c. I could not help reflecting, how much more I enjoyed in my sick chamber, than they possibly could in such futile pleasures. And if I, who am less than the least of all saints, enjoy so much, what must those who continually live near to God enjoy? Those lines of Pope,

> One self-approving hour whole years outweighs,
> Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas,

came into my mind; and, though I do not altogether agree with him in the spirit of the passage, presuming that he refers to a satisfactory consciousness of rectitude before the

Deity, yet there is a sweet peace arising from the humble hope that our conduct is in some good measure regulated by the standard of the Gospel, and that our aim is universal obedience. This peace is unspeakably consolitory. Such a peace it is that Jesus has left to his disciples, a peace founded on evidence of that faith in Christ which justifies the soul before God, purifies us from dead works, and leads us in newness of spirit to serve the living God.

25. What a delicate office is that of a mother! How wary should be her footsteps, how spotless her example, how uniform her patience, how extensive her knowledge of the human heart, how great her skill in using that knowledge, by the most vigilant and strenuous application of it in every variety of occurring circumstances, to enlighten the understanding and reform the heart! Legislators and governors have to enact laws, and compel men to observe them; mothers have to implant the principles, and cultivate the dispositions, which alone can make good citizens and subjects. The former have to exert authority over characters already formed; the latter, have to mould the character of the future man, giving it a shape which will make him, either an instrument of good to the world, or a pest in the lap of society. Oh, that a constant sense of the importance and responsibility of this station may rest upon me! that grace may be given me faithfully to discharge its difficult duties!

30. I have been thinking of those words of James, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith nothing wavering." I believe Christians are often lean from day to day, because, though they ask for grace, they do not ask in faith. I sometimes feel so little and so vile, that I fear God will disdain to help me. But I am always unhappy when I am in such a frame. Surely the God who gave me a spirit capable of loving and serving him, cannot esteem it beneath him to regard my cry, when I plead that my soul may be fitted for his service. I fear I indulge too much in a spirit of bondage, which generates gloom, terror, superstition, and despair. I am always happiest when I can view God as a merciful Creator who is more ready to give spiritual than temporal blessings, and has given us every encour-

agement we can desire to trust in him. The idea that God is not willing to help me, that he is a hard master, that I have not obtained and shall never obtain his grace, or any similar discouraging thought, paralyzes my exertions, throws a superstitious terror over my soul, which drives me from prayer, and unfits me for every duty. I must believe that, though the vision tarry, it is my duty to wait for it. Yes, my soul, wait at wisdom's gate, and thou shalt not be disappointed. Though thy sins discourage thee, and thy worldly attachments alarm thee, wait upon that Jesus who was never called upon in vain. O my God, glory be to thy name, that I can hope in thy mercy, and believe that thou wilt one day bruise Satan under thy feet, and give me a complete and final victory! I beseech thee let me not be deceived!

31. I have been very much tried to-night with skeptical and unbelieving thoughts. Oh, that I may be brought out of the horrible pit, and the miry clay; that I may bewail these things, not merely as a calamity, but also as a sin! It is a hard conflict. I hope I shall be enabled to wait upon God and not faint. I feel that I am blind and ignorant. God grant this trial may be the forerunner of more glorious manifestations than any I have received. Yet I do think the religion of Christ seems to me a glorious religion, a religion worthy of an all-perfect God, a religion embracing principles more elevated, motives more noble and powerful, of a tendency more holy and desirable, than the heart of man could have conceived. Yes, my faithless, treacherous soul! it is the truth of God. I can, I do, stake upon it my everlasting all.

November 5. What a great, what a blessed thing, to be a Christian indeed! Surely, after evidence of having attained this glorious character I do pant and strive. I would rather be a Christian than the monarch of the world. That blessed name embraces and supposes principles more elevated, and joys more exalted, than all other names combined. Men may talk of honor, of integrity, and of moral rectitude: they may dream of pleasure, and follow the phantom till they die; but the Christian alone possesses dispositions calculated to make us either truly good or truly happy. So long as man is supremely bent on his own interests, his morality must be defective. None but a principle embracing universal good, and loving supremely what is supremely excellent, will do for creatures formed for happiness; for in loving ourselves supremely, we love what is infinitely unlovely; and in seeking our own interest as our highest end, we virtually take up arms against all that is excellent in the universe. Oh, for the precious spirit of the Gospel, which makes us willing to be nothing ourselves, that God may be all in all.

14. How kind, how good is God! How mercifully has he removed all my complaints, and given me, once more, health and strength! I am amazed at my ingratitude. How little dependence can be placed on death-bed repentance. In my own experience, how much have I seen of the evanescent nature of resolutions formed in seasons of sickness. Alas! it is my grief, that a return of health brings a return of cares; and, in the whirlpool of necessary employments for the poor body, God and my soul are almost forgotten. Why is my heart so treacherous, so prone to leave the centre of all my hopes, the God in whose hand my breath is, and whose are all my ways? I long to weep and weep away this heart of stone, and to honor God by the steady exercise of all the graces of the Spirit. Oh, for a vigorous and overcoming faith! Oh, for grace to live above the world. On reviewing the past week, how little have I done of the great work for which I was sent into the world! I have said something for God; but have I done any thing for him? and were my motives pure in what I said? How much strange fire has been mixed with my best duties! I should lie down in despair, had not God laid help on ONE mighty to save.

17. I think I have, this evening, some feeble desires after God. It does seem, that I am growing in the knowledge of my own heart, and seeing more of the preciousness of the Savior. Life appears to me to be chiefly desirable as a medium of glorifying God; and to live to the flesh, even if there were no difference to be made between the righteous and the wicked at death, seems to me undesirable, and, I had almost said, (and I ought to be able to say) hateful. TO BE HOLY! those blessed words kindle desires in my soul inexpressibly more elevated and ardent, and suppose joys more delightful and transporting to me, than all the combined allurements of the world. And yet, (O, how can it be so?) my sluggish spirit tires and faints, in the pursuit of the former, while, till roused to a sense of

my guilt in doing so, to pursue the latter is comparatively easy! Deplorable, criminal inconsistency!

December 5. I have once more been permitted to commemorate the dying love of Jesus. Through the preparatory exercises, I was troubled with wandering thoughts, and apprehended a barren season. I hope, however, it was not entirely so. I think I felt my own utter destitution of every good thing, and was, in some measure enabled to apply, as an empty sinner, to a full Savior. I think I saw something of the preciousness of the dear Redeemer, and had some thankful remembrance of his death, some longing desires to know and love him more, some sweet emotions of christian charity toward my fellow-travellers to the Zion above. I think I longed to be enlightened in all gospel truth, and to be completely conformed to the image of Christ, to have my soul filled with the love of God. For a few moments I felt that it was inexpressibly sweet to be so near to God. Dear Jesus! what I know not teach thou me! Carry me safely through the dismal wilderness of this world, which I am so apt to look upon as my home! And O, how delightful it will be, to sing "Worthy is the Lamb," when I arrive at the heavenly hills where they sit, and celebrate, without weariness, thy praise!

17. I have had some precious seasons in prayer, since I wrote last. I felt this morning, and a day or two since, such a sweet consciousness that I had committed my soul into the hands of Jesus, that I was almost assured that his grace would always be extended to me, and be sufficient for me. I felt that my own extreme weakness was no reason for distress, for if I was called to great trials, especially to bereavements and death, (at the prospect of which my fearful soul always trembles) God would surely give me necessary aid. But to-night I am so bound down by earthly ties, so knit to the creature, that I have no spiritual enjoyment. These endearing temporal connexions; how they wind about my heart, and, by the excess of devotedness which they engage, agonize, at the same time that they delight, my soul! I am in little or no danger, of falling into the snare of dissipation and extravagance; but I am in danger from a quarter, perhaps no less alarming, because more specious, and glossed over by so many things which are really necessary and proper, as almost to elude

suspicion. Dear Savior, enable me to crucify every inordinate affection; and do thou reign supreme in my heart.

January 7, 1814. I have had some happy moments in committing my guilty and helpless soul into the hands of my Redeemer. I feel an unspeakable tranquillity in the belief, that when I am in trouble, and need his aid, especially in the hour of death, he will remember the trust I have committed to him, and appear for me. How infinitely does the joy, arising from a strong scriptural hope of union to him, outweigh all earthly pleasures combined! Oh, yes; religion is the sweetest solace of life. When that reigns in the soul, all is harmony and peace.

TO MISS L., AT CHARLESTON, S. C.

Boston, January 16, 1814.

I rejoice to hear of your sister's recovery. I trust she will be enabled to say from the heart,

My life, which thou hast made thy care,
Lord, I devote to thee.

Surely those who have been brought near to the grave, and are unexpectedly restored to health, are under special obligations of gratitude and love. And it is one of the most awful and convincing proofs of our inveterate tendency to sin, that recovering mercy so seldom excites those holy and grateful dispositions, which we think we shall exercise when pleading for deliverance from sickness and death. Yes, dear M. we do indeed need line upon line, and precept upon precept, and continual supplies of grace, to keep alive in our souls the spark of spiritual life. Blessed be God, that he will undertake with creatures so perverse, so obstinate, and bring them into the way of life, and keep them there, by the unmerited watchfulness of his love, by those kind and merciful dispensations which we call afflictions.

When our prospects darken, how apt are we to lose all our joys, not remembering that, though we change, God abideth faithful? We always have cause enough to rejoice and be glad in the Lord, although we often have cause for nothing but sorrow and humiliation in ourselves. But we cannot be content to be nothing that God may be all in all, Self will rise, and plead for a little gratification. Happy are we if a little is all we give.

What is the reason, my dear M that some christians glorify God so much more than others? Is the deficiency of the latter, in this respect, to be always and exclusively ascribed to their own negligence? Nothing seems to me so desirable as to live only to God, to have no will, no interests, no fears, no desires, contrary to him. But, alas! instead of this, it is only now and then, that I feel in any measure that this is my case; while the principal part of my time is wretchedly filled up with selfishness and sin. But it can do no good to complain to the creature. I only mention these things that you may be induced constantly to pray that I may be quickened, that I may not walk in a vain shew, until the just indignation of a holy God sweep me away forever.

Have you read Hannah More's Christian Morals? Is it not excellent? How much of christian knowledge, and christian feeling, she manifests! The essay styled "Thy will be done," ought to be engraven on every professor's heart. What a mercy it is that our lingering steps, our misjudging apprehensions, have so many excellent helps! But the best guide of all is the Bible. How can we estimate the mercy of having such a guide always at hand?

Do you see the Christian Observer? There has been in some of the last numbers, a sketch of a most interesting debate in the British Parliament, respecting the propagation of Christianity in India. The missionary cause appears to be rapidly advancing; the angel, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, seems to have commenced his flight. How reviving to know that this cause, of all causes the best, is flourishing, especially in that part of the world which has hitherto been enveloped in the thick darkness of ignorance and sin. Yes, Jesus shall reign over all. May the blessed day be hastened!

23. I wish to record the mercies of the past week, as having been singularly great, and affording abundant encouragement for the future. On Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, I was much distressed, struggling with a spirit of murmuring and rebellion against the

divine will respecting me. But on Friday morning I was enabled, in some good degree, to lay by my own desires, and say, Not as I will, but as thou wilt. The prospect of death, should God call me to that trial, was sweetened; and I was filled with a peace which the world knows not of. I cannot but think I shall glorify my Savior if called to pass through the furnace; for it does seem as if he is pledged to perfect his strength in my weakness, and display his all-sufficiency in sustaining and carrying me through every conflict.

February 12. Oh my soul! how pass thy fleeting moments? What account canst thou give of thy stewardship? Alas! my flesh almost trembles at these solemn inquiries. I am alarmed when I remember that twenty-three years of my short life are gone. And how are they lost, lost, never to be recalled! What has been done for God? Oh, that I could weep tears of unmingled sorrow when I answer, Nothing. Were I now in awful judgment before Him who is the Judge of all, and should I hear the heart-rending doom of the unprofitable servant pronounced upon me, could I say any thing in self-justification? God knows I could not. Must I not, may I not, say, to the blessed Jesus,

Where can I fly but to thy breast:
  For I have sought no other home,
For I have known no other rest?

24. The situation in which I am placed is very trying and difficult. I am emphatically like a city set on a hill. I am required to exhibit the fruits of a full grown tree, when I am but a feeble plant in the garden of the Lord. Impotence itself is not more helpless than I am But I trust I am one of those little ones, whom my Redeemer carries in his arms, and cherishes in his bosom. Blessed be his name, I have hitherto found him a strong tower. I have confided in him, and he has helped me. Yes, many a time have I had reason to set up, like Jacob, a memorial of deliverance in the hour of extremity. And, though in view of the multiform duties of life, I exclaim, How am I sufficient for these things? yet I must hope that I shall be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening me. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

26. No one can know the trials of the ministry, except those who undertake the arduous employment, or those who reside in their families. When we consider how much clergymen's time is occupied by unavoidable company at home, how many special meetings, if they are faithful to their Master, they must attend, what a large portion of their time is occupied with visiting the sick, how much in necessary preparations for the pulpit, and then, in addition to all this, what numbers of parochial visits they are required to make, and censured if they do not; it must appear obvious that their task is arduous, their trials peculiarly great. It is a great trial to be obliged to attempt study, when the mind is distracted with the burden of a whole society. It is a trial to be, as it were, compelled to spend that time in visiting, which ought to be devoted to writing, and meditation; and then to be censured for negligent and ill-digested sermons; or, if time and pains are taken to write good sermons, to be complained of for visiting so little. Surely if societies and churches knew the trials of their ministers, in addition to those personal troubles which are common to all; they would be more tender of them, more fervent in prayer for them. I do not wonder that so many of the laborers in the Lord's vineyard faint before mid-day. They ought, in every way, to be strengthened, and comforted, and encouraged, by their people.

March 5. I think I can say, from experience, that it is good to draw near to God. But language can no more convey, to one who has no knowledge of it from experience, an idea of the blessedness of communion with the Father of our spirits, than it can of the nature of the light of the sun, to one who was born blind. It is indeed ineffable; in comparison with it, every earthly joy dwindles into insignificance, and becomes light as a puff of empty air. If I, who have so little faith, can say so, what must the eminent Christian feel? What must the spirits of the just made perfect feel?

I have had much solicitude for my children this evening. At one time, such a sense of the everlasting consequences of the trust committed to me, in reference to their immortal souls, rushed upon me, as literally made me shudder. I wonder I do not realize this more habitually.

Oh that God would make me faithful, and crown my efforts with his blessing!

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Bridgewater, March 8, 1814.

You ask my advice about the correction of children. I feel that I am not at all qualified to direct in a thing of so much importance. I will however remark, that I do not like the punishment of whipping, unless when the child exhibits strong passion, or great obstinacy. It ought to be the last resort. Neither do I like those punishments which are chiefly directed to the selfish principles of our nature, as depriving a child of cake, sweetmeats, &c. I should rather aim to cherish feelings of conscious rectitude, and the pleasure of being beloved. I would have a child consider his parent's declaration that he is not good, his worst punishment. For instance, if your little boy has done very wrong, I would tell him he must not stay with mama, or must not take a walk, or see company, or that he must eat his dinner alone; and all, because he is not good enough to be indulged these usual privileges. But there are some cases in which the use of the rod is indispensable.

I am writing in the midst of the noise of tongues, and can only add that I think very well of Locke's System of Education generally; also of Miss Hamilton's, and Dr. Witherspoon's. But after all, education is only an instrument, and the little ones must be borne, in the arms of faith, to that compassionate Redeemer, who has given parents such abundant encouragement to trust in him; committing them always into his hands, believing that, if they do so, he will direct their steps.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, April 22, 1814.

Have you seen the Memoirs of Mrs. Harriet Newell? It is a *very interesting* book. Such unreserved and disinterested devotedness to the cause of Christ, in so young a person, appears very extraordinary in these times of religious indifference and sloth. There was an elevation and spirituality in her character, seldom met with at the present day. No one can help admiring her excellence. Christians will be humbled by its contemplation, and stimulated to greater activity in the service of Christ.

April 24. I have noticed a very striking difference between my religious exercises now and several years ago. Then I was all joy; felt as if I could die for Christ; had the most joyful anticipations of heaven; would sit for hours, almost in an extacy, and sing the most spiritual and elevated of Watts' hymns, particularly those concerning the frailty of life, the vanity of the world, the glorious state of departed spirits, &c. The language of my lips, I then hoped, (and I still hope it was so in some degree) of my heart was,

> Jesus! when shall that dear day,
> That joyful hour, appear,
> When I shall leave this house of clay,
> And dwell amongst 'em there?

But now, alas! I too often feel happy, when I can look with the least complacency upon death! Yet it does seem to me that, if I know my own heart, my views are more scriptural, more consistent and more mature, than they were then. The Bible is more truly precious; and I see far more of the sinfulness of my heart, and my perfect impotency. At times, I think, my views of the character of Christ are more evangelical, and my faith stronger now, than they were then; for sometimes, when my path is hedged up, and I am ready to sink in the deep waters, I am enabled calmly to stay my soul upon the bare promise of God. I certainly, if I am not altogether deceived, am not so self-dependant and self-sufficient now as I was then. But my joy is not so constant, nor, at any time, so great, and I am more frequently distressed by doubts of my being a Christian at all. When I think of death, my dear husband and children seem like "weights that draw me downward still," and sometimes the thought of leaving them, is overwhelming. Still I, on the whole, think my state better now, than it was then, and that I have better evidence of having passed from death unto life. Joy alone, is a fallible criterion. I had rather have the assurance that I had parted with one darling sin, or given up one beloved idol for Christ, than be raised to the third heavens in joy. But, oh! I long for both! I long to

> read my title clear
> To mansions in the skies,

and to have the comfort of such an assurance. Let me, then, press on; continually examining my progress by the word of God, and applying for fresh anointing to my great High Priest, and my hope will be like the morning light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

25. How poor and despicable is the ambition of living merely to shine. How many trifle away their little span, in the useless glitter of brilliant nothingness. It is a selfishness to desire to live merely to be admired, which one pities at the same time that he condemns it. It is a spectacle, at once curious and melancholy, and that would create astonishment, were it not accounted for by the depravity of the human heart, to see the worms of yesterday,, who to-morrow are not, and whose knowledge is, at best, a mere point, vainly swelling with the ostentation and pomp of self-complacency. Of how little consequence is it whether we live splendidly, if we live usefully? This is what we ought to labor after. This is an ambition which God approves, an ambition which suits the nature and dependant condition of man, and which will ennoble and elevate the faculties; but which, otherwise employed degenerates into unprofitable waste, and criminal perversion.

May 2. My lungs are very weak. I often feel great distress from very slight exertions in talking. O how do I wish that my little strength may be devoted to the glory of God; that my breath may not be wasted by idle and useless conversation! How dreadful to think that I have employed my health no better, for the best of Fathers, and in the best of causes! I long to do some good in the world. I long to be useful to my dear fellow creatures. I long to see all engaged for God. Oh, that these desires may be attained! I had some sweet freedom in prayer this morning. I felt that I could go to God, through Christ, as my Father. I think I felt something of the spirit of adoption, and saw something of the preciousness of Christ; remembered with satisfaction and thankfulness, that he had trodden the rugged path of human life, and the rough descent to the valley of death, and smoothed them both for his children; and felt as if I could follow where he had led the way.

This day resolved to set apart fifteen minutes every day, for special prayer in every season of affliction, and especially for strength to conquer my last enemy death. I need a double share of grace, owing, either to the weakness of my faith, or to the extreme sensibility of my nerves. I think I have given myself to Christ. I hope, I believe, he will appear for me when every other dependance fails me, and shew me that he is faithful in keeping that which I have committed to him. I am nothing but sin and weakness; but he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come to him.

7. I have been blessed with much spiritual comfort for some days past. I scarcely ever had such distinct exercise of faith. It has seemed as if I was as conscious of the divine presence, as ever I was of the presence of a friend when conversing with me. And I have had such a persuasion that God did hear my prayers, and have gone to the throne of grace with so much of a spirit of self-renunciation and sweet reliance on the intercession of Jesus, that I must conclude that my exercises have been different from any thing which the carnal heart can feel. The necessity of a Mediator was strikingly presented to my view this evening. It seemed impossible for a being, so holy as I saw God to be, to admit sinners, transgressors of his holy law and contemners of his glorious perfections, into his approving presence, without a Days-man between them to lay his hand upon both. I think I know by experience the meaning of that text, "To you that believe he is precious."

14. I feel much comfort to-day in the thought that I am in God's hands, for life and for death. Death has, indeed, had many terrors to me; but I know that I shall be more than a conqueror, if Christ strengthen me; and he is my hope. Heaven and its employments sometimes appear inexpressibly delightful.

Salvation! Oh the joyful sound!

Ear hath not heard another so sweet. Yes, I know that God hath laid up joys which the heart of man cannot conceive, for them that love him. The gift of Christ is indeed, I feel it to be, an unspeakable gift. My heart sometimes yearns over my dear, miserable, dying fellow-sinners, who shut their eyes and ears to the voice of mercy. "Madness is in their hearts" of a truth. But they know it not. Pity them, O God! for Jesus sake, pity and save them!

28. I have, of late, been much more comfortable in my body, and less so in my mind. It seems impossible for me to keep in a spiritual frame, except when under the immediate pressure of affliction. When I see how time flies, and how little I do for God, it astonishes me. Such ingratitude and pride would melt into deep contrition a heart less obdurate than mine. It is strange beyond measure, that I can be contented to live so immeasurably below my obligations. O my God! teach me ever more to give heed to thy statutes, and to have respect unto all thy commandments, that my ways may be cleansed from every thing displeasing in thy sight!

June 12. I heard an excellent sermon to-day, from the words, "Glorious in holiness," Ex. xv. 11. I felt that I could rejoice in this attribute of the Most High, as that which conferred glory on all the rest. I thought I could not wish God to save sinners at the expense of this most precious attribute; and that I saw the reasonableness and excellency of the law which condemns sin, and the wonderful manifestation and union of mercy, wisdom and justice in the redemption of the world by the blessed Savior. But I see just enough of divine things to make me long to see more. Oh! if these partial communications from the Father of lights are so sweet, what must heaven be?

19. My friends are very desirous that I should take a journey into Connecticut for my health, under the protection of an acquaintance who is going on in an empty carriage. The prospect of leaving my children is distressing. Dear little creatures! they cling to me with the utmost tenderness. I sometimes feel it to be mysterious that I should be, to such an extent, disqualified, by the feeble state of my health, to do my duty to them, when those duties are so important. But I do not complain, for it is God who

orders it thus. If he were to deal with me according to my deserts, I should be swept away with the besom of destruction. I long to have no will of my own; to live as an humble child at the feet of Jesus. God is wise, and righteous and good. I commit my way unto him.

July 4. *At Killingworth, Conn.* O God, my soul is bowed down to the dust under this burden of sin; a grievous load too heavy to be borne! Oh, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? Thou blessed Jesus, who art able to bruise sin and satan under my feet, I fly to thee! I humbly implore thy aid, to strengthen me to perform and keep this resolution which I this day make. I solemnly resolve to endeavor, in the strength of the Lord, to be more watchful over myself, to maintain a constant sense of the divine presence, to take time to meditate, and think how Jesus would have acted in my situation, before I act, that I may not rashly say or do those things which, afterwards, I could weep the bitterest tears to recal. Blessed Redeemer, do thou assist me; or rather, do thou work by me and for me; or I shall be swallowed up in the mighty flood of corruption which threatens to overwhelm me. Help, Lord! or I must perish!

20. I am in great distress. My dear father is apparently on the brink of the grave, with a dreadful fever. My hand trembles so I can scarcely write. It seems as if my feeble frame could not support me through the trial. Dearest of earthly friends, husband and children excepted! Were it not for the consolation of knowing that God reigns, what should I do? Heaven spare him! Heaven prepare us, and especially my dear mother, for what is before us! Heaven support me, or I shall not bear the trial which God seems about to send!

22. The conflict is over. My dear father, who loved me as himself, is gone, never to return! I may say with the Apostle, I am "troubled, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." But the wound is deep; it can never be healed. Dear man! I dwell too much on the merely earthly circumstances of this afflicting event. I ought to look beyond the veil. His sufferings were great; it pierces my heart to think of them. But what were they to the glory now revealed? Blessed be God for the satisfactory

evidence he gave of preparation for the great change, and for the spiritual comfort he enjoyed, amid his bodily pains, and in prospect of death! I would bow at the solemn rebuke, and say, Thy will be done! God of mercy, support, comfort and sanctify me!

Aug. 4. I feel, I hope, sincerely desirous that this solemn providence may be sanctified. How can I again lean upon such a broken staff as this world? How can I ever again think myself secure in the possession of any earthly good? Oh that I might feel hereafter, that I am indeed living as a probationer for eternity! Now I ought to shake myself from the impure adhesions of this wretched world, and be more engaged in the work I was created to do. Now it is high time to awake out of sleep. But I am too much like the sluggard who is roused by the accusations of conscience, but still is too indolent to rise. I am clogged, paralyzed, by "this body of death." I cannot excuse my supineness. I can only cry, God be merciful to me a sinner! I feel that it is only because Jehovah is infinite in mercy, that I am not beyond the reach of hope. I have reason to bless his holy name for the supports he vouchsafed me in the hour of trial. I think I had some precious views of his character, and of the rectitude of his government; some earnest desires that my sins, my idols should all be buried in my beloved father's grave; some sense of the evil of sin, on account of which a merciful God was compelled in faithfulness to inflict so severe a chastisement upon me. But, alas! how is it with me now? My dear husband is come; and I find I still lean to the creature, and am wickedly reposing on one who, like myself, is crushed before the moth; one whom God sent to comfort me, a blessing which he kindly lent me, but which I, wretched creature! am disposed to put in the place of God! O how treacherous is my heart! What a miracle of mercy that my heavenly Father spares so perverse a child! I can only bring my soul to the efficacious fountain which grace has opened for sin and uncleanness. Here must I lie, for it is my only hope.

5. What a changing, dying world! How does every relict of departed joys whisper to my soul, This is not your rest! On every side I behold memorials of my departed

father. They loudly speak the vanity of earthly comforts and pursuits, and bid me lay up treasures in heaven. I hear, and mourn; but do I hear and profit?

For us he languished, and for us he died,
And shall he languish, shall he die in vain?

7. It is the Sabbath; and, on account of the great dampness of the weather, and my peculiar liability of late to take cold, and a more than usual indisposition, I have felt it my duty to remain at home. What multitudes of persons in health forsake the assembling of themselves to hear the word of life, and worship Jehovah in his holy temple! How alarmingly prevalent, in our country, is the breach of the Sabbath becoming; a sin which the history of the Israelites shews to be peculiarly offensive in the sight of God! We cannot expect the removal of our national judgments while, as a people, we despise the chastening of the Lord, and turn not unto him who smiteth us. God have mercy on us, and pour out his Spirit, and turn us unto himself by repentance that we may be saved!

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Killingworth, August 2, 1814.

You have been informed of my unexpected journey to Connecticut. I came to take my last farewell of a parent, a father, dear to my heart, whom God has taken to a better world. How little did I anticipate such an event when I left home. But I can now see the kind interposition of providence in so disposing my concerns as to make such a journey necessary, notwithstanding the strong reluctance I felt to undertake it; so necessary indeed, that I was compelled to surmount every obstacle which interfered with its accomplishment. I came; and had the satisfaction of being with my excellent father a few weeks, of enjoying his society, and, I hope, of contributing to his happiness. I came to behold him struggle, for nearly five days, in an unequal and distressing conflict with a fatal sickness, and then, at last, yield his spirit into the hands of Him who will have all his children to be with him, where he is, that they may behold and participate in his glory.

And now, my dear E., if you have thought me negligent in delaying to write, you will think me so no longer. You have lost a parent; and I need say no more. But I have, as you had, precious consolations under this solemn rebuke, which have, in a great measure, sweetened the bitterness of the affliction. I believe that one reason why the loss of friends, of Christian friends at least, is sometimes so insupportable to survivors is, that we are too selfish in our feelings. We are apt to derive nourishment for sorrows which enervate the mind, from two sources; one the recollection of what we have lost, the other the remembrance of what our friend suffered. But immoderate grief on these accounts is sinful, for it savors too much of the spirit of that idolatrous declaration, "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?"

My dear father fell a victim to the distressing fever which has swept away, within the last two years, so many of our most valuable citizens and faithful ministers. He preached, as usual, the Sabbath before his death. His last text was, "And his rest shall be glorious." The next Friday he was, I have no doubt, admitted into the regions of the blest, and made an everlasting partaker of the joys he had so recently described. Happy spirit!

> Safe art thou lodged above these rolling spheres,
> The baleful influence of whose giddy dance,
> Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath!

And who could wish thee again imprisoned in this dark world, far removed from God and heaven, and again subjected to the conflicts, the sufferings, and the sins of this mortal state?

But my father's death was a general loss. His family mourn not alone. Many feel the wound to be grievous; many mingle their tears with those of his afflicted relatives, over the remains of the man, the friend, the spiritual guide, whose fervent prayers, whose wise and benevolent counsels, have ceased forever. Glory be to God, for the precious promises of immortality which the Gospel unfolds! Glory be to God, that this light of life has smiled upon the darkness of the tomb, and taught the believer that, because Christ lives, he shall live also. This consideration whispers, 'Peace, be still,' and turns the terrors of the last enemy into light, and hope, and joy. Pray for me, my dear friend, that this afflictive, but righteous, providence may be sanctified; that I may be made by it, a partaker of God's holiness. A partaker of God's holiness? Glorious thought! What a wonderful view it affords of the love of God, that he should afflict us to make us partakers of *his holiness!* Blessed end!

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Killingworth, August 5, 1814.

I thank you, my dear H., for your kind and excellent letter. Though I needed not such a proof of the continuance of your friendship, yet every token of affectionate remembrance is peculiarly gratifying in seasons of affliction. To be thought of, and prayed for when we most need prayer, is comforting indeed. And such has been my case in no common degree. Yes, my dear girl, human comforters can do but little toward alleviating the anguish of a heart bleeding with a wound like mine, unless God also administers consolation. And, blessed be his name! such consolation I think I have in some measure received. The stroke was no common one. It swept away one of the kindest of husbands, and one of the most affectionate and faithful fathers, that ever wife or children were blessed with. Those who knew him best, loved him most; and all felt the loss to be great. To this bereaved congregation especially, it seems to have been a stroke, which cannot now be estimated, and must long be felt.

But, though the dispensation is mysterious, though the death of my beloved parent has dried up forever the principal source of happiness with which I was favored in this town, and, with a few exceptions, in this world; yet I have reason to bless God, that I am not conscious of ever having wished to counteract the divine decree. There has been so much of mercy mingled in this cup of sorrow, that it has sweetened the bitter dregs which I have been called to taste.

Oh, H., there is comfort, great comfort, in the believer's latter end. Then the value of the Gospel appears. What philosophers and wise men have shuddered at, what infidels cannot usually behold without horror, the believer can meet with humble confidence and holy joy. It is the hope of immortality through faith in Jesus, which bears him triumphant,

> through the gloomy vale
> Where death and all his terrors are.

Take away this hope, even were he certain of exemption from suffering, what clouds and darkness would settle, in impenetrable gloom over the grave? Yes, the preciousness of those animating assurances of eternal life, and of the resurrection of the body, which are given in the Gospel of Christ, can never be so forcibly felt, as when we are about, either ourselves to put off the earthly house of this tabernacle, or to behold a dear friend bid a final adieu to all earthly scenes. Well might the Psalmist say, "They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but abideth forever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people forever," to defend, to preserve, to cheer them, even when heart and flesh fail them.

With the dead this earthly scene has closed forever. They have lived, they have died, they have passed into the world of spirits. We can be cônnected with them, precious and dear as they once were, no more. But what remains for us? Much, very much. We are to see to it, that we despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when we are rebuked of him. We are to take heed that, by our faithful improvement of afflictions, we may have evidence, that our tribulation has worked in us patience, our patience experience, and our experience the hope which maketh not ashamed. It is dreadful, when God is cutting off one creature comfort after another to teach us that this world is not our rest, to be clinging, with all the energies of an undiminished attachment to that very world, which is thus constantly breaking from our grasp, disappointing our hopes, and piercing us through with many sorrows. Wretched delusion; fearful case! for "he, who being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Pray that this may not be the result with me. Pray that, having passed under the rod I may not be found incorrigible, but more docile and humble, and devoted to God.

September 2. *At Boston.* I was quite well when I left Connecticut, but feel since my return, much that appears wrong at my breast, and an almost constant pain in my side. At times I am almost discouraged, and think these complaints will terminate in a consumption.

I had hoped to have been spared to my darling children; to have used my humble exertions to guide their infant minds in the paths of truth and holiness; to have watched over their early associations, and directed those propensities which a mother best understand, and on the judicious management of which so much of their future usefulness and happiness depends. I had hoped to have directed their early studies; to have put into their hands such books as I know to be useful, or accompanied with my own observations such as I know to be dangerous, if they were greatly inclined to peruse them. I had hoped to have gone with them over the instructive pages of history, to have drawn their minds from an undue regard to riches and worldly endowments, by pointing to the noble and virtuous conduct of statesmen and generals taken from the cottage and the plough. I had hoped to have shewn them, that ambition is not always successful, that pride is never productive of happiness, that outward greatness does not always involve magnanimity. And, above all, I had hoped to have shewn them, from the history of past ages, that the lusts and passions of men produce wars and fightings, turmoil and misery and death; and to have drawn them to behold the difference, manifested in the spirit of the Gospel of Christ, from this picture of wretchedness and sin; and thus to have taught them to cultivate the dispositions which that Gospel requires, and on which the happiness of individuals and of society depends. O how many ways may the mother seize, to teach the offspring of her love the way of truth, which no one else can perceive.

But what if this office of maternal tenderness, dear to my heart as life, should be denied me; have I any complaint to make: No, none. Is not God able to take care of my children without me? Yes, infinitely able. Let me not then be unreasonably anxious how it may be with my poor body. God governs, infinite rectitude is on the throne of the universe; and why should I fear? If it is for his glory that I should live, he is able to preserve me; if it is not, ought I to desire it? Oh that I may ever stand in a waiting posture; not looking upon this world as my home, but desiring that all my will should be that the Lord's will should be done?

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, September 11, 1814.

We have been forming a Female Bible Society here, upon the plan of the one in Philadelphia, and in consequence of letters received from that Society. What an honor for us to be permitted to be co-workers with God in spreading that Gospel, which bringeth glad tidings of great joy to this miserable world. And those women, whose whole attention is not necessarily devoted to their families, ought to embrace such opportunities of usefulness, with joy. How much do our sex owe to the Gospel. And should we not testify our thankfulness, by extending its blessings to those who are strangers to them? Were we faithful to redeem the time, we might all do much more than we do for the promotion of the kingdom of Christ. And is not the object worthy of such an effort?

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, September 15, 1814.

I always find that I am in a better frame of mind when my earthly gourds are blighted. I do not pray for afflictions; that would be impious presumption in a worm like me. But I think God has graciously led me to see, that they may be profitable, that they may even be pleasant, when he sees fit to send them. I never was so happy as when the fatherly correction of God has shewn me that this is not my rest, and my soul has relied, in faith and hope, solely on the faithfulness and grace of God through his dear Son; when, though my earthly comforts were cut off, I felt willing it should be so, and could repose on the precious belief that a Being of infinite wisdom and goodness, governs and guides the concerns of the universe. The joy thus produced is an unmingled joy; it is joy in God, while self dwindles into its native nothingness.

I am happy to learn of your welfare, and of your comfortable situation. I trust that the people of A., have received you as a rich gift from the Great Head of the Church, and that, as such, you will be faithful to them. I also hope that you are given to your husband, to be a help to him in his arduous calling as an ambassador for Christ. And a great many ways are there, my dear friend, which God has afforded you now, of doing good all the days of your life. May the Father of Mercies make you mutual helpers in this vale of tears; that so your mutual burdens may be lightened, and your mutual joys and your individual usefulness increased, and your reward in heaven be rendered more glorious.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, October 8, 1814.

As to those time-consuming parties, which disarrange a family for a week before to prepare for them, and for a week after to compose those affairs which have been put out of place, I scarcely know, from experience and personal observation, any thing about them. My early habits of country simplicity are so thoroughly interwoven with my constitution, that it would distress me greatly to go very much out of my accustomed way. Indeed, dear S., when we consider time as a talent which God has given us, to use for purposes which have for their object his glory, and the good of our fellow-creatures, is it not melancholy to think how much of it is irrecoverably lost? I have often thought how eagerly a dying unconverted sinner would long for one day, for one hour, to repent and seek for pardon. And yet how little is the abuse of time regarded? How many squander a whole life away, and find, at the close of it, that they have made no use of time but to accumulate to themselves greater misery forever, by a remembrance of the waste.

November 1. I feel an intense desire to put on Christ more uniformly, in my life and conversation. All that is past, looks dark and unprofitable. My best duties have all been stained with sin. I should despair, but for the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin. Precious truth! How like a healing balm it mitigates the agonies of a conscience which tells me that all has been wrong! "The blood of Christ!" sweet, soothing sound! Here is hope for despair; here is joy for misery.

5. The smoothest course of nature has its ills;
And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.

How true is this! And what pains are so keen, as those inflicted by a friend? But it is fit that these miserable idols, to which we cling so fondly, should often be the cause of our greatest trials. We read our sin in our sufferings. Oh for a broken heart, that I may mourn its deep declension from God, and the love of the world, and the pride of spirit, which I have to record against myself to-night!

20. Many, who have no knowledge of the subject from experience, think that religion makes men gloomy. *I* know nothing of such religion. How can that which prepares us for afflictions, which teaches us to expect disappointments, which lowers our calculations and desires from this world, which resolves all things, with sweet complacency, into the will of the all-wise and all-merciful Governor of the universe, which assures us that Jehovah is pledged to make all things work together for good, which gives to the soul, in this wilderness, a foretaste of heaven, and a hope attested by evidence which God himself has prescribed, of ultimate admission to the joys of his immediate presence,—how can such a principle make men gloomy? It is impossible. O yes, I can say from experience, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." So far as I can trust in God, and love his will, so far I am happy. Oh for more continual, more perfect, resignation and confidence. I *know* that what he appoints is best. May this conviction have an abiding influence upon my feelings and conduct! My soul, "trust thou in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

December 2. Oh death, thou destroyer of human hopes and of human joys! when I look around me, and behold the ravages which thou hast made among my friends, my kindred according to the flesh, I am astonished at the strength of that depravity which leads me still to cling to this dying world. Why, oh why, do I not rest my weary soul on the unchangeable realities of heaven? There shall I meet those dear ones who sleep in Jesus. Animating hope! "Then let my soul march boldly on," nor faint in the day of rebuke; but sweetly yield up all my earthly comforts, when Jesus demands them, that I may find my all in him.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, December 4, 1814.

You know Mrs. ——. This day she lost a child, the fifth which God, in his inscrutable providence, has called her to give up within the last four or five weeks. I have felt very much for her. It appears to me enough to rend asunder the cords of life. But we can bear all things, which the Almighty sees fit to inflict, if he strengthen us. "As thy days," he says to the believer, "so shall thy strength be." And Mrs. ——, if I am correctly informed, is a witness for him that his faithfulness doth not fail. She behaves, I understand, like "a weaned child" under this accumulated rebuke. Such a stroke, it would seem, must detach the soul that has received it from this perishable world. And yet the privation of every earthly comfort, will only make men miserable, unless almighty grace sanctifies the rod. How little can mere human fortitude do in such cases. Let *us* endeavor to learn wisdom from this melancholy providence.

Have you read Dugald Stewart's Philosophical Essays? He is generally esteemed, I believe, one of the greatest men of the present age: and yet the loss of an only son, it is said, has almost made a wreck of those faculties which have delighted and astonished the world. Some merely carnal men, as we are compelled to believe them, do indeed endure trials with wonderful composure. But I know not how it is, unless they have some idol left to which they cling more closely. And perhaps, as the nature of sin is to harden the heart, they do not feel the wound so keenly as they would if they were christians. Such cases are, however, comparatively few; and all experience testifies, that faith and hope in God through Christ, constitute the only effectual support in trouble.

TO A FRIEND AT P.

Boston, December 15, 1814.

How is it with you, now, my dear friend? It is to be expected that the two years which have elapsed since a letter passed between us, have witnessed some changes in our affairs and in our feelings. I have experienced the rod of affliction, in the loss of dear friends. The first stroke was not very near; the next left me alone of my father's children: the last took away the dear parent himself. You might properly, and your friendship for me will lead you to, ask, 'And what has been the effect of these repeated visitations?' and I ought to be able to answer, Tribulation has worked patience, and patience experience, and experience hope. But, my dear friend, I am a perverse scholar even in the school of affliction. I too often find that it is only the immediate pressure of trials, that keeps me in any thing of a suitable frame. Like those children who return to folly as soon as the chastening hand of the parent is withdrawn, I feel that I have an evil heart, continually inclining me to depart from the living God. Yet, great as has been my guilt in profiting no more by the rod, I would still humbly believe that these chastisements, especially the last and greatest, have afforded me some comforting views of God, which have strengthened and animated me to go on my way rejoicing, some manifestations of the state of my own soul, of the preciousness of the word, and of the safety and sweetness of trusting in the Lord, which I should not otherwise have had. My dear friend, why is it so difficult to confide in God, in relation to what looks dark and doubtful before us, when we have so often found that he is a very present help in trouble, and that he does make his severest dispensations work for our good? Why can we not cast all our cares upon Him that careth for us? It is a great dishonor to our compassionate God, to be doubting whether he will sustain us in our extremity, or fearing that he will lay more upon us than he will enable us to bear. No, no; it cannot be. Only let us entrust ourselves, and all our interests, unreservedly to Him who loved us unto death, and we must be safe. But ah! these vile hearts! Faith struggles, and struggles, and prevails; and then we have comfort. Then unbelief, secretly but successfully, undermines our hopes, and we are in darkness. Yet let us not fear. God will, I trust, one day bruise Satan under our feet; and then, "Oh how pleasant the conqueror's song!"

December 17. Oh for those sweet and precious views of divine things, which I had when my dear father was called from this fluctuating world! I was then so comforted and filled with peace. I cannot express the manner in which this life was exhibited to me. It seemed as if I stood on the outer verge of this world. My connexion with eternity appeared more immediate and certain, than that which I had with time. My husband and children, except one, were at a distance; my dearest present friend had gone to the world of spirits; and it appeared to me that I could apply to myself, as if addressed to me, individually and alone, the direction, "Arise and depart, for this is not your rest." I found that God was enough. I felt that his will was my will; and was unspeakably happy. Self seemed, in some degree, reduced toward its proper place, and I could say, God is on the throne, what more can I want? I perceived and felt that he governed uncontrollably, and my soul was satisfied, entirely satisfied. Oh for some such precious mercy drops upon my thirsty spirit now!

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, January 3, 1815.

Do you find as much leisure for public charities, as you used to before your marriage? Young ladies should consider the talent which is entrusted to them of time, disencumbered of domestic cares, as a precious deposit, and devote it faithfully to the service of Christ. They may not have so much influence (though it is far from being always so) as married ladies, but they have more time and opportunity for action in the various fields of christian benevolence which it is proper for females to cultivate; they can *do* more for the promotion of the various charities of the present day. Yet *our* situation, my dear friend, is not without opportunities for doing good. A married lady can exert greater influence in her own family than any where else; she may be more useful there than she could be any where else. It is indeed in a silent, unobserved way; but not on that account the less acceptable to God, or the less beneficial to the world. Besides, industrious women may redeem much time from their families for more public duties. But in saying what might be done, I condemn myself.

I have nothing pleasing of a religious nature to communicate. I sometimes think you are much favored, to be so quietly seated down in the midst of a people where doctrinal divisions are scarcely known; though I am sensible that the greatest outward prosperity of Zion, cannot produce abiding comfort in that soul whose inward graces are languishing. It cannot fail, however, I think, to give pain to every christian, whose graces are not deplorably benumbed by the absence of the Sun of righteousness, to see thousands weekly visiting the sanctuaries of the Most High, the original use of which was to proclaim to lost sinners complete salvation through Him who died to redeem us from the curse of the law, without ever being informed by their spiritual watchmen that they are exposed to that curse, and in perishing need of that Savior! Painful indeed is it to see miserable sinners, in a land of sabbaths and sanctuaries, hastening to eternity without being informed, that they must be born again if they would enter the kingdom of heaven, that by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified; to see them coming away, from the place professedly devoted to religious instruction, ignorant of God, of themselves, and of the only way of salvation; resolving, if resolving at all, merely to be more moral, while the heart and soul of true morality—the motives from which truly moral conduct springs, are entirely overlooked! Am I uncharitable? Charity rejoiceth in the truth. But is this the truth of God? Is the Gospel of the Son of God little better than a system of heathen ethics? for if mere external morality is all it requires, it is little better.

Yet those who regard this as the Gospel, tell us there is no essential difference between their views of it and ours! Strange, passing strange! When we consider the tremendous realities of death, judgment, and eternity; when we realize the awful import of that declaration, "He that believeth not shall be damned;" when we behold a person, who has never performed one sinless action, going into the presence of the Holy One, trusting to his morality for acceptance; and remember that Christ alone is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and that there is no salvation in any other way; can we admit that there is no material difference between our views of religion, and those to which I have referred? Is not the difference great, awfully, eternally great? If not, I am blind indeed.

But while we feel, and maintain, the vast importance of the truth, and the guilt and the danger of error, we must be careful to avoid, if possible, giving even an occasion for the imputation of uncharitableness. Those who are zealous for the truth, and even those who have experienced its renovating power, sometimes provoke this charge, by an acrimonious and intolerant spirit. If men once think we are actuated by the spirit of party, farewell to the hope of doing them good. They will give us as much credit for a concern for their happiness in religious, as in political disputes, and no more. "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes," says the Psalmist, "because they keep not thy law." If the friends of evangelical doctrine would plead their cause with such a spirit, they would gain far more to the kingdom of heaven, than by "flowing words and swelling speech."

January 5. How difficult, how hopeless is the task of pleasing every body! A fortnight since a lady said to me, with a tone and manner which gave peculiar emphasis to the words, "How is it possible you can go out so much, visit your people so frequently, and be engaged in so many charitable societies, without neglecting your family?" This week a different imputation has been attached to my conduct. I am censured for doing so little in a public way, and confining myself so much to my family. I am accused of want of interest in public charities! because I give to them so little of my time and attention. Such different opinions are formed of the same conduct! But the voice of wisdom bids me, cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and study to approve myself to God.—As to my conduct, I am very sensible that I do little good in the world, in comparison with what I might do. But whether I could with propriety, devote more time to the active duties of public charities, I have serious doubts. More of the charity of prayer to Him who can effectually ameliorate the calamities of the world by subduing its corruptions, I might, I ought to bestow. Alas! here how far I fall short! But my opinion is, that her own family has the first claim to the attention and active exertions of a married lady. So much time as can be redeemed, (and she should feel it her duty to redeem as much as possible,) from the ordering of domestic affairs, the care and culture of children, the duties of personal religion, the improvement of her own mind, and the perusal of works from which assistance may be derived in the all important business of education, may be, and much of it ought to be, devoted to the duties of public charity.*

I feel that I do very wrong in suffering myself to be so much affected by the opinions of my fellow creatures. A person must form his own rules of conduct; and, having judiciously formed, must pursue them, and not be continually fluctuating according to the sentiments of every one with whom he happens to meet. Oh that God would give me grace to redeem my time, so that I may render my account of it with joy!

February 2. I am discontented and unhappy. The day has been passed in hurry and confusion. I am always miserable when deprived of opportunities for reflection and private devotion. I think I can look forward with delight, to the moment when these worldly hindrances will be removed forever.

13. The good news of peace has just arrived. Amidst the noise of bells and guns and acclamations, I think my heart has been ascending to God in desires that, having given us peace with the nation with whom we have been

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*It may be well to state in this place, that, at the time of her death Mrs. Huntington was a life-member of the Female Orphan Asylum, and of the Fragment Society; a life-member, and the Vice-President of the Graham Society; a life-member, and a director, of the Corban Society, and of the Female Society of Boston and vicinity for promoting Christianity among the Jews; a life-member, and the Corresponding Secretary, and one of the visiting and distributing Committee, of the Female Bible Society of Boston and Vicinity; an annual subscriber to the Widow's Society, and to the Boston Female Education Society; an annual subscriber to, and Vice President of, the Old South Charity School Society; an annual subscriber to, and a director of, the Boston Female Tract Society; and a member of the Boston Maternal Association.

contending, he would not suffer us to be at enmity with himself. I think my earnest longings have been excited that, as a people, we may be induced to make peace with heaven, and to listen to the heralds of divine mercy, more joyfully than to any mere human overtures of reconciliation, however desirable. Oh that, as a people, we might be the friends of God!

17. I feel to-night something of that distressing nervous depression, which my God has so graciously prevented for a long time,—a natural infirmity, which, but for His upholding grace, would, before this time, have destroyed me! Blessed be his name, that I have, for several months, been almost uniformly cheerful, and enjoyed great mental composure! But oh, should he leave me! A reed, shaken with the wind! what should I do!

I, of all creatures in the universe, should be humble, should be pitiful; for I am the weakest of the weak. I do not know any extreme of dejection to which I might not sink. But God holds me up, and I am safe. Dear Lord, let me "never stray from the shadow of thy wing!" let me never be so infatuated as to lean on any arm but thine, or trust in any other refuge but thee!

Give what thou wilt, without Thee I am poor;
And with Thee rich, take what thou wilt away.

20. How precious is a throne of grace! There, when I approach it in humble faith, I find relief from every burden. I feel, I trust, an ardent desire to be made more useful in my visits to our dear people; to manifest, when among them, more of the spirit of Christ; to have my speech, when conversing with them, always with grace, seasoned with salt, that it may contribute to their edification. Oh that the precious interests of their souls may lie nearer my heart, and oftener urge me to God in their behalf!

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, March 26, 1815.

I have not heard from you since the return of peace, an event which, for several days, clothed almost every face with a smile. It is indeed a joyful event. And yet, one cannot help being concerned at the apparent selfishness of the joy, manifested by most, on this occasion. Few appear to regard it in any other light, than as it affects the prices of goods, or the advantages for trade, or for the indulgence of luxury. Few, alas! appear to recognise God as the author of the blessing, and their consequent obligations to him.

But let me not dwell upon the dispositions and views of others, while I have so much greater need to examine my own. My dear friend, it is *we*, professors of religion, Christians, as we hope, whose ingratitude is the most provoking to God. National judgments, in my view, are especially sent for the profiting and purifying of Christians. Impenitence under them, and ingratitude upon their removal, are to be expected from those who are, under every dispensation, treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. But that God should behold his own children as stupid and carnal, as vain and worldly, after such judgments as before, oh! this is criminal, is alarming indeed. If, as all experience testifies, there is great danger of this being the case with christians, then there is great need of their praying, constantly and fervently, for each other. We should seldom pray for ourselves, without remembering all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ, every where. Were professors of religion more faithful in performing this duty, we should not see so many who, in a spiritual sense can scarcely be said to live at all. We should find them engaged for God; conformed, much more than they are, to his likeness; and, by their holy example and fervent prayers, constraining many others also to glorify their Father in heaven. Our churches would soon be purified from pernicious errors, and the fruits of our religion would manifest it to be of God.

Our Bible Society (Female) succeeds very well, and is doing much good. I suppose you have seen the New-Jersey and New-York reports for 1815. The latter is very interesting. Three Siberian princes are earnestly desirous of obtaining the Scriptures for general circulation among their people, having been convinced by experience of their salutary influence; and have applied to the Russian Bible Society for a supply. The dawning of the millennial day really seems to have come. Let us pray fervently, that we may behold stronger and stronger beams of light, till the Sun of righteousness shall arise upon all lands, and illuminate all hearts.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, March 27, 1815.

A female society has just been formed here, for the liberal education of such indigent pious young men of good capacity, as manifest a strong desire to preach the gospel; and it is confidently expected the gentlemen will take up the business on a large scale. Such societies are comparatively new, but, you will at once perceive, of great importance. They ought, I think, to be instituted throughout Christendom, for the evidence is every day accumulating of the fact, that the harvest is great, but the laborers are few. In what way will so great an amount of good be likely to be accomplished, as by raising up faithful ministers? I hope females will more generally and deeply feel their unspeakable obligations to the religion of Christ, and make greater exertions for its extension in the world. They can do much, very much, in various ways; and surely they are bound to do all they can. Christians of both sexes will see and feel the necessity of making far, far greater exertions in every way, than they have yet made, for the spread of the gospel, before the millennial glory of the Church is attained.

April 4. This subject of education is one that lies nearer my heart, than any other merely temporal concern. It is easy to speculate about it, and to prescribe rules to others. It is easy to form a correct and most judicious system; and to say with Foster's man of indecision, "This is a good plan, a plan which would be very useful in its results," and after all, make shipwreck of the disposition and minds of our children, by mismanagement. All this is easy, for the same reason that it is easy to acquire correct opinions on any subject. But acting, practice; here, here is the difficulty. The truth is, no one can govern a family of children well without much reflection and, what the world calls, trouble. There must be an accurate judgment formed respecting the character of each child, and a *regular* and *consistent* method, adapted to each pursued. And what is more difficult still, the parent must uniformly govern herself. This, certainly, is not easy; it calls for the unremitted exertion of several most eminent and rare christian graces.

It appears to me that three simple rules, steadily observed, from the very germ of active existence, would make children's tempers much more amiable than we generally see them. *First.* Never to give them any thing improper for them, because they strongly and passionately desire it: and even to withhold proper things, until they manifest a right spirit. *Second.* Always to gratify every reasonable desire, when a child is pleasant in its request; that your children may see that you love to make them happy. *Third.* Never to become impatient and fretful yourself, but proportion your displeasure exactly to the offence. If parents become angry, and speak loud and harsh; upon every slight failure of duty, they may bid a final adieu to domestic subordination, unless the grace of God interposes to snatch the little victims of severity from destruction. I feel confident, from what observation I have made, that, although more children are injured by excessive indulgence than by the opposite fault, yet the effects of extreme rigor are the most hopeless. And the reason is, associations of a disagreeable nature, as some of the ablest philosophers have stated, are the strongest. This may account for the melancholy fact, that the children of some excellent people grow up more strenuously opposed to every thing serious, than others.* They have been driven, rather than led, to observe the forms and outward duties of religion, and its claims upon their hearts have been too commonly presented to their minds, in the imperative, and not in the inviting form.

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*Such instances there undoubtedly are; and the parents of such children have great cause for humiliation before God, for if their Christian fidelity had been tempered with a little more of Christian wisdom and Christian kindness, the result would probably have been different. But cases of this kind are by no means so numerous as is commonly supposed. The truth is, the children of religious parents are expected, (and justly too), to be better than others. Hence every instance of the disappointment of this expectation, makes a strong impression on the mind of an observer, which is extremely apt to lead him to very erroneous conclusions, respecting the influence of the instructions and restraints of a religious family. An impartial investigation of facts will prove, that the maxim, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is as true now as it was in the time of Solomon.

For my own part, I find myself falling so far short, that I am, sometimes, overwhelmed with the distressing apprehension of erring fatally. Dear children! I tremble for you, when I reflect how dangerous is the path in which you are to tread, and how difficult the task of directing you in safety. Lord! I commit myself, whom thou hast made the guide of their youth, I commit their hearts and ways, unto thee!

TO MRS. H. OF BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, April 27, 1815.

My letters are short, I acknowledge; and I suppose you will look incredulous and smile when I say, they are so, in a great measure, for want of time. "What," you will say, after reading the preceding sentence, "can possibly be the reason that you are so hurried? There must be mismanagement or something of that nature." Very well; I must rest satisfied to have you believe so, if you will, and only reply, You know just as much about my numerous engagements, interruptions, and hindrances, as half the people in the world know of the reasons for the conduct of the other half; which conduct, they, without mercy and without knowledge, condemn.

But I am not censuring you. I doubt not your good nature is ready to make every apology for me, even though you cannot take into view those particular circumstances in my situation, which present the most satisfactory excuses, for all seeming negligences of this sort, to my own mind. To own the truth, (and it reflects no honor on either my firmness, or my faith,) I am, dear sister, sometimes almost discouraged. My duties are so much greater than my strength, that I feel entirely disqualified for this station. I despise that narrow, selfish spirit, which, satisfied with the gratification of its own desires, sits quietly down, and heeds not the calamities of a miserable world, a world filled with brethren who are perishing. No; I am not pleading for opportunity to foster and indulge so dishonorable a temper. But when I see an increasing family of immortal souls, whom I have been the instrument of bringing into this wretched world, cast upon my care; when I think that I am to be a principal instrument in forming their characters, and thus, in fixing their destinies for eternity; that instructions, and prayers, and efforts must be accompanied with an example of unblemished purity; that every inconsistency in my conduct may produce in their minds a false association, the influence of which may be most pernicious, and the smallest deficiency in the correction of first errors produce a habit which may never be counteracted; I tremble. When I view these things, contrasted with my weakness, my blindness, my continual declensions from the straight path, I am overwhelmed. Add to this the claims of a large congregation, those constant attentions at home and abroad, many of which consume the time I want for better things; and the weakness of my lungs, which always makes talking irksome, and often laborious and distressing,—consider all these things, and you will see that I have at least some occasion for misgivings. But I do not complain. If my heavenly Father strengthen me, weak as I am, all these things will be easy. Pray for me, that I may have stronger faith.

May 10. I always find the weakest people the most ready to animadvert upon the actions, and judge of the conduct of others. They are not disposed to make allowances for motives which they do not understand. I find in myself a propensity to give my opinion with the greatest confidence, upon those subjects with which I am least acquainted. A thorough knowledge of a subject, commonly brings to view so many manifestations of its parts and bearings, as, often, to produce a total alteration in its aspect as first presented. And if a subject appears to me, upon examination, in a very different light from that in which I first viewed it, there may be still other points, which have been overlooked, that would give it yet another appearance in my view.

As repects the conduct of others, I have sometimes judged, and pronounced an unfavorable decision, when the circumstances of the case have been such, as to prevent my ascertaining whether there were, or were not, good reasons for the action I condemned. How very reprehensible is such a temper! How it displeases and even irritates me, when I discover it in others. May I be led, when I see my actions called in question, to abhor the spirit of censoriousness in myself! Oh for a meek and humble temper, and a heart satisfied with the approbation of God, whether men praise or blame.

16. Time is short, very short. Oh for more of the temper indicated by that reply of our Lord, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Especially it seems important that I should pray without ceasing, because it will soon, it may very soon, be too late for me to do any thing in this way for the world, and for my dear children. Blessed be God! I have had much enlargement of late, in pleading for the latter. I think I can appeal to Him who knoweth all things, that I have chosen Jehovah for the portion of my children, above every other portion. Honor, and wealth, and long life, and all temporal blessings, have appeared, for them, as trifles and vanity compared with this. And as I have chosen God for them above riches, and as he has promised to be the God of the seed of believers, I do feel great encouragement that he will also choose them for an inheritance for ever. I have had strong desires of late that, if it shall please God to remove me from this world before he takes my husband to himself, he will impart to him a double portion of wisdom, and strength, and fidelity, and patience, in behalf of our children, that they may not suffer by my removal. I make this a special subject of prayer. But I desire that, if it is for the Lord's glory, I may be spared. And I bless his name that he has, I humbly hope, given me a good degree of willingness that this desire should not be granted on any other conditions.

22. I have had unusual peace and comfort of mind of late. The strength of the Lord is my confidence. I am not afraid to trust to it. I rest, with calmness and joy, upon the precious, covenanted mercy of God in Christ. I would not exchange the hope, I have of an interest in that mercy, for all the health, and wealth, and accumulated good things the world can afford.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, June 14, 1815.

I am reading the Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel Peirce, compiled by Andrew Fuller. How the life of such a man shames and condemns that of common christians. He was preeminently a holy man. The most striking feature of his piety seems to have been, an annihilation of self, and total absorption in the will of God. This grace appears to me the most lovely of all the admirable qualities combined in the christian character, and that, by which the superiority of his to all other religions is, perhaps, the most strikingly exhibited. And is it not also the most rare, and the most difficult to be acquired?

If we habitually felt properly submissive to our heavenly Father's will, where would be that unavailing and harassing solicitude about our future temporal circumstances, which so often interrupts present enjoyment? where that dejected and disconcerted spirit with which we so often contemplate the desolation of our earthly hopes and visionary schemes? Instead of distressing ourselves, and preventing, by our unbelief, that good from being communicated by our Father, which he is able to cause every trial to produce, we should, under affliction, meekly and humbly wait for what the Lord our God should judge best, and enjoy the comfort of such a heavenly frame in the midst of sorrow. How would such a disposition smooth the rugged path of life, and convert every occurrence of the way into a blessing! Well, my dear friend, the God we serve is able and willing to give us this precious grace. There is no reason why we should be destitute of it, but that which springs from our own unbelief, which is our sin. Let us then have stronger confidence in God, and wait upon him for his blessing by continual prayer; and he will not disappoint our hope, but shew us, by happy experience, that his will is the best, and that none of those who trust in him shall be desolate.

TO A FRIEND AT C.

Boston, June 30, 1815.

I have thought, my dear friend, of your present situation as respects religious privileges, with much interest. You think it unfavorable to progress in the divine life. On many accounts it is so, without doubt. But it is the peculiar excellence of our religion, that it enables its disciples to derive instruction even from those circumstances which to human view, appear the most adverse. The promise of God standeth sure, that *all* things shall work together for good to them that love. And, my dear Mrs. ——, all our religious privileges can be profitable, only as God blesses them to us; and he is infinitely able to grant as great a blessing without them. We *may* receive as much religious improvement from being deprived of a means of grace we had anticipated with delight, as from enjoying it. In general, undoubtedly, God affords the blessing in the use of his established means; but when he sees an humble heart, longing after the enjoyment of ordinances of which it has been deprived by his providence, he meets with such a soul, and shows it that his presence and grace are not confined to particular places and circumstances. He is the Sun; and all the beams of light which illumine the christian's heart in attending upon ordinances, emanate from him. He is the Fountain, from which all that is profitable in the most faithful sermon, the most spiritual companion, the most useful connexions, is derived. And to him may every thirsty soul repair, without the intervention of any outward means, and receive an abundant supply for every want. What a source of comfort is this, that nothing can shut out the soul that longeth after God from communion with him? Bolts and bars may exclude the presence of man, sickness may prostrate the body and enfeeble the mind, persecution may cut us off from all those outward privileges which usually are the means of sustaining the christian's hope and joy; but all these combined, cannot shut out God from the soul that desires his presence. "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." So the people of God may always expect to find it when, as you are at present, deprived, providentially, of the opportunity of attending upon the public means of grace. But if they might attend upon those means, and neglect to do so, they need not expect the divine blessing. They may attempt to seek God at home, when they might, and ough , to be in the sanctuary; but they will not find him. While they are thus slighting his ordinances, he will turn a deaf ear to their prayer.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, December 31, 1815.

This is the last evening of the year. My mind is very solemn, as I reflect that another year of my life has fled forever. Oh, S., what a shadow is this little span which we call life! Miserable man, who has no hopes of a better! Well might the wise man exclaim, "Madness is in the hearts of the sons of men that do evil, while they live; and after that they go to the dead." What madness can equal his who, living in such a world, and seeing one after another prostrated and taken away by the universal destroyer, can fondly fancy he may here take his rest; can pursue, with supreme devotedness, the bubbles and the gewgaws of time, and think them worth pursuing; can shut his eyes to the glories of heaven, and the awful realities of eternity, to which his next step may introduce him!—But there is something even more strange than this. The christian, he to whom Christ, and holiness, and heaven, have been precious beyond what tongue can express, even he can turn his eyes from the glories of his present hopes and his future inheritance, and cleave to the vanities of this miserable, dying world! How deep-rooted and strong must be that depravity, which can thus ensnare the hearts of those whom Christ has chosen out of the world.

June, 1816. And is it possible that a whole year has taken its eternal flight since I last wrote in my journal! What then is life, composed as it is of a few such fleeting, evanescent periods?—a vapor, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away! Oh my God! what have I done for thee in this space of time? This book testifies against me, that I have done but little, almost nothing; for it brings to my mind mercies received; mercies idolized; mercies forgotten; opportunities for doing good neglected, judgments slighted, privileges abused; it upbraids me with having been, in a measure, dead while I lived! Were it not for the infinite mercy of God in Christ, I must, even now, lie down in shame, and have confusion for my everlasting portion. The last year, I have had good health, but a lean soul. I tremble at my unprofitableness. What account can I give of my time? Waste, waste, waste! Oh my injured Father! I cannot look up in thy presence. I am condemned, justly condemned, before thee! I see how richly I have deserved the heavy stroke which God appears to be about to inflict upon me, in the person of my youngest child. Oh for grace not to misimprove my chastisements, as I have the many mercies of my heavenly Father!

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, July 3, 1816.

Our dear little Elizabeth is quite unwell. She frequently has slight convulsion fits; sometimes two in a day; at other times, none for several days. They do not generally last more than half a minute. They originate, I fear, in a diseased state of the head. I kept the dear babe at home till she was three months old; at the expiration of which period, my friends well remember my remarking, that she was the strongest and most forward child I ever had. She was then put out to nurse, and appeared very lively and well for some time. She grew fleshy, and appeared sober, and not inclined to play. But as this was the case with my oldest, I was not alarmed about it. At nine months old, she still manifested this uncommon soberness, and could not sit alone, though she appeared to stand strong. I became uneasy. My physician insisted that the child was doing perfectly well, and advised me to keep her out all summer. When she had stayed a month longer, I determined to take her home. It was, I found, with difficulty I could make her smile; and unless handled with the utmost gentleness, she would scream as if she was hurt. Now she occasionally laughs, but cannot sit alone, and does not hold any thing in her hand, though she is a year old. Her countenance is intelligent, but sorrowful. She sighs, inclines to keep her fingers clenched, and puts her hand to her head hundreds of times in a day. She cannot now bear her weight ten minutes, without reddening in her little face with fatigue, and sinking down into the lap. What is to be done for her I know not. The physician still encourages me to hope that it is nothing serious, or that will be lasting; but I fear he is mistaken. No sacrifices, no privations, would be any thing to us, if this precious child could be saved. Oh that God would direct us! But I can only lay my hand upon my mouth, and say, Father! not as I will, but as thou wilt. Distressing as is the thought that a darling child is in danger of death, or of losing its reason, (to which such affections as Elizabeth's, if I am not mistaken, directly tend,) I must be still, for God is a rock, and his work and his will are perfect. Pray for us dear E., that the circumstances of this dear babe, whether of life or death, may be ordered in infinite compassion, and that we may be prepared for, supported under, and sanctified by, whatever God has in store for us. I do feel, at times, that, as a father pitieth his children, so my heavenly Parent pities me, under the sorrows which my sins have compelled him, in faithfulness and love, to inflict upon me. It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth to him good.

September. What a poor vehicle is language to convey an idea of the realities of religious experience? When God presents a view of heavenly things to the mind of the believer, he can only say with the Apostle, "It is unspeakable." But this I can and must say, God is faithful. Here let me record it as a perpetual remembrancer for the time to come, GOD IS FAITHFUL. His everlasting arms are abundantly adequate to the support of his children, however tried, however afflicted. Who can feel the import of that blessed truth, "In *all* things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us," but those who have been taught of the Spirit? I have been led in triumph through trials I should have deemed insupportable; but not by my own strength. Ah! I am weak, as the worm crushed by the foot of a child. But I have been enabled to feel that the strength of God was mine, to go out of myself and lean entirely upon the omnipotent ONE. I am now standing and admiring the goodness and grace which turned my night into noon-day.—But I am looking back upon a glory which has gone by. I am supported and resigned; but my meridian sun is beclouded. Sin has led me, in some measure, away from God the fountain of my joy; and unbelief and solicitude have entered my mind. Oh my soul! return again unto thy rest.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, December 20, 1816.

Once more has my gracious Benefactor appeared for me, one of the most unworthy of his creatures, and put the song of salvation and praise into my mouth. I can scarcely forbear weeping, as I write, at the remembrance of the mercies, the accumulated mercies, I have experienced, as contrasted with my own criminal negligence in the service of the best of masters. Oh! "to grace how great a debtor!" I trust this will be my delightful song through eternity. The past summer has been marked with peculiar trials, and equally peculiar mercies. Early in the spring, I beheld in my beloved Elizabeth the seeds of disease; disease which I now believe must terminate in death, and which affects a part beyond the power of medical skill to reach, the brain. For a fortnight, I felt a distress which cannot be described. But He, who has never, never left me in the season of trial, appeared, and turned the darkness of night into the light of noon-day. I gave her up to him, and found it better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man. O how were his everlasting arms put underneath and around me, and how adequate did I find them for my support. Never did I have so much spiritual enjoyment before. I did realize, that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed. I looked forward to the trial through which I have lately been conducted in safety, with a deep impression of the uncertainty of its issue. But I felt a strong confidence that heaven was my happy, happy home, which I might soon reach, and which appeared more lovely than language can express. Thus, my dear friend, can the blessed God sweeten the cup of sorrow which he puts into the hands of his children. Oh it is good to be in his hands, to have no will but his!

The dear child, I think, very gradually declines. Whether this complaint will terminate in death, or the total absence of reason, and how soon God only knows. I feel a strong assurance that, whether she lives or dies, she is the Lord's. And what is the chaff to the wheat, the body to the soul? May I be living as if this world were not, as in fact it is not, my home. May you and I, and all our dear friends, by our enjoyments and our sufferings, be prepared for that blessed place, where the inhabitants shall no more say, "I am sick;" where all tears shall be wiped away; where sin shall be destroyed, and the saint be imbibing more and more, through eternity, the image of Him who is perfect.

You inquired, what is my method with my children at prayers, &c. I am ashamed that you should ask advice of me, who need counsel so much myself. But if I can suggest to you any new thoughts, I shall be very glad; and expect the same friendly office from you in return. I begin to have my children in the room at prayers, within the month after their birth; and they always continue to be present, unless they are sick, or are excluded the *privilege* as a punishment for having been very naughty. It is difficult, when they are quite young, to keep them perfectly still. But the habit of thinking they are too young to be present at family devotion, is a bad one. And besides, if they do not come in, some one is obliged to remain out with them, and is thus deprived of a precious privilege, and an important means of grace. After they get to be two years, or more, old, and are able to understand the meaning of your conduct, if they play, or in any other way make a disturbance, they may be taken out, and compelled to remain by themselves till the service is over; which will generally be felt by them to be so great a punishment, that they will not soon commit a similar offence. I would not do this, however, on every slight deviation from perfect order, as children cannot be expected to conduct like men.

As to government, I have always made it a rule never to give a child what it is passionately earnest to have, however proper the object may be in itself; because, otherwise, an association would immediately be formed in the mind between importunity and success. Were a child always told, when he cries for a thing, "You shall have it when you show a proper temper," it would soon teach him to be reasonable. I think it the destruction of government to be capricious, to refuse one day, what, in circumstances not seen by the child to be different, is granted on another; to let fretting and teazing carry a point at one time, when, at another, they would bring punishment. Children very soon see whether we are consistent; and little deviations from an established rule, afford great encouragement for the next time. These *little* deviations do great mischief, and are often slidden into very imperceptibly by the parent, though the child is quick-sighted enough to observe them.

One thing, my dear friend, I think of the greatest importance, and that is, that children be made always to mind, and to consider the parent's word as their law. Giving up *once* after a command has passed, may lay the foundation, and lead to the establishment, of a principle of insubordination, as troublesome as unconquerable. For this reason absolute commands should be as few as possible. I also think it dangerous to play with children in the way of command, saying, 'Do this or that,' when you do not mean that the thing must be done. It weakens parental authority.—I never like to tell very small children to kiss strangers, as they often feel a degree of backwardness very difficult to overcome; and if they refuse, it is necessary to pass it over without compelling obedience, which should not be, or to have a combat with them before the company, which hardens them to reproof. It is better to say, if a stranger offers to kiss them, and they refuse, and it is thought best to say any thing, "Your kisses are of no great consequence; they may be dispensed with, I dare say." This leads the child to think he is not of so much importance, as he might otherwise be led to suppose.

It is also very necessary to good government that punishments should be proportioned to offences. If we make no distinction between intentional and complicated offences and careless inadvertencies, the child, by the frequent recurrence of these latter faults, and the sharp rebukes they bring upon him, will become so accustomed to severe reproof, that he will not mind it. Tenderness of heart is the most powerful human engine of parental government; and when this is lost, it seems to me all is lost, unless the grace of God interposes. The inevitable consequence of frequent reproof is, a heart blunted in its sensibilities, and unmoved by the parent's displeasure. Of course all temptations should, as much as possible, be put out of the way of children. Many little things should not be observed, which, if you were conscious the child knew you had observed, ought to be reproved. A harsh and angry tone should never be used, unless a gentle one has previously failed. And I believe, where the authority of the parent is early established by the mild and gentle means, to some of which I have alluded, severe measures need be resorted to very seldom.

TO A FRIEND AT P.

Boston, December 25, 1816.

My dear friend.—Last summer I received a letter from you, and also a copy of the constitution of your Maternal Association. The receipt of them would have been sooner acknowledged, had circumstances permitted. But I trust it is not now too late to do so, and express the satisfaction they afforded. Since then, a few ladies in Boston, with some of whom you are acquainted, have formed a similar association, and adopted the same constitution.* I trust we have found them useful meetings; I am sure they have been pleasant.

The uncommon attention which is paid to the rising generation, at the present day, is a token for good. It is truly astonishing, however, that baptized children should, as such, be so sadly neglected by the churches to which they belong, as they now are; though it is a fact, which should be acknowledged with gratitude, that some churches have of late taken measures, as new as they are likely to be salutary, toward effecting a reformation in this particular.†

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* Similar associations have since been formed in several other places, and they have been found highly useful, both to mothers and to their children. The constitution and rules which have been commonly adopted by these societies, were published in the Boston Recorder, of December 18, 1824.

† What the measures were, to which Mrs. Huntington here alludes, the compiler is not informed. But, as the subject, though it has hitherto received little attention, is one of great importance, a brief account, it is presumed, will not be unacceptable to the reader, of a course of proceeding in relation to baptized children, which has been pursued with happy effect, in some churches in the middle and southern states.—Once a quarter, the baptized children, as such, are assembled in the Church, with their parents or guardians. The children are placed together in

As to books for your Maternal Association, I am willing to advise you as far as I am capable, though my knowledge upon the subject, whatever you may think, is extremely limited. Upon the whole, I give the preference to Locke and Witherspoon, above any other writers I am acquainted with, on the subject of education; though they are not perfect. Some very few things in the latter appear to me unnecessary, and are perhaps impracticable. Miss Hamilton's letters are admirable, so far as they refer to the intellectual culture of the mind, and I may add, to mere moral discipline. Her religious opinions are quite exceptionable; but as they are not presented very prominently, are not likely to do much hurt, probably none to those whose minds are thoroughly imbued with correct principles. I scarcely know a writer that has suggested so many useful thoughts to my mind as Miss Hamilton. I would by all means procure her letters, if they can possibly be obtained. Miss Edgeworth, I am neither so well acquainted with, nor so much pleased with, as others. She writes, in my view, too much like a theorist; some of her plans are quite visionary; indeed in this country quite impracticable. Her stories, however evince an uncommon knowledge of the human mind. Mrs. Grant's Intellectual Education I have seen, but cannot say I was very much pleased with it. There are many useful hints in the work, but it is not so simple and practical as some others, and as such a work ought to be. There is a series of letters in the Christian Observer on this subject, I think in the 12th volume, which are uncommonly judicious.

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the body of the house; the parents and guardians are in the side pews, and, if more room is needed, in the gallery; and the Pastor and Elders before the pulpit. After singing and prayer, the children are solemnly addressed by the Minister; their peculiar relation to the Church is explained to them, their duties and obligations are stated, they are told that the vows of God are upon them, &c. &c. Then the Pastor addresses the parents and guardians, explaining and enforcing their peculiar duties, in the presence of their children. He then turns to the Elders, and addresses them in relation to the duties, in regard to baptized children and their parents, incumbent on the Session, i. e. the Pastor and Elders. The exercises are then concluded with singing and prayer, and the apostolic benediction. It is said, that where this course has been faithfully pursued for a series of years, a very large proportion of the baptized youth are hopefully pious.

These helps, which God has afforded us, ought to make us more useful in our maternal capacity. They certainly call for gratitude. But, after all, if we were better christians, we should be more likely to make good mothers. Consistent, ardent piety, is the most essential qualification in a mother, for the proper education of her offspring. Children are more influenced by example, than by any thing else ; and were our behavior before them at all times circumspect, Christ-like; did not the ebullitions of passion, the spirit of worldly-mindedness, and the love of selfish gratification, so often appear in our conduct, and utterly defeat our well-formed plans and good intentions, we should not so often have to complain, that we labor in vain, and spend our strength for nought. Alas! in correcting the faults of our children, how many faults do we find to correct in ourselves! Were it not that it is of God who showeth mercy, there would be little encouragement indeed. But, blessed be his name! there is encouragement sufficient to stimulate to the most unwearied exertion. And those who diligently sow the seed, in humble dependance on his blessing, shall doubtless sooner or later, reap an abundant harvest.

Our Association meets the same day with yours. We wish you always to remember us on those days, as we shall you, and other similar institutions; and on all other occasions when it is proper. We need each other's prayers.

February 26, 1817. I never felt as if I had more cause for gratitude, than now; every trial is so mercifully tempered. I enjoy the exhibitions of reason in my other children a thousand times more, on account of dear Elizabeth's situation. God is very gracious to me, even in respect to her. She seems to suffer but little, and is a sweet, quiet child. This heart of stone, this flinty, stubborn heart, which can requite love so great with ingratitude, is, I think, my greatest trouble. I shall begin, the sixth of next month, which will be Elizabeth's birth-day, to observe a quarterly fast on her account.

March 15. Heaven looks very sweet. But I am sometimes led to fear, that such a vile creature, so little inclined to improve under the culture of the Gospel, can never enter it. Were the christian religion a delusion, it would be the most blessed delusion that ever smiled on the heart of man. But it is not, it cannot be, a delusion. Oh no; blessed be God! there is an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserving in heaven for those who obey the calls of his word; and their afflictions, however severe, shall all be made to work for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Saratoga Springs, June 20, 1817.

We have been brought thus far on our journey in safety· My health is good, and Mr. Huntington's evidently improving. We shall continue here a few days, and then set out for the Falls.

In the society of such a place as this, a christian, while he finds much that is pleasant, sees many things that give him pain. To hear one complaining of sorrows, for which we feel there is a balm which he knows not of, and another regretting past disappointments, and vainly promising himself ample remuneration in future gratifications, when we know there is a hope sure and steadfast of which he is ignorant, without being able to speak of either, is revolting to the spirit of philanthropy as well as of Christianity. He is the wise man who is able to seize the "time to speak," and employ it properly. And it certainly argues a criminal indifference to the interests of our fellow-creatures, or a deplorable fear of man, to be habitually and totally silent on those subjects, in such circumstances.

O could the influence of the great world be thrown into the scale of religion! Blessed be God! the time is coming when this will be the case. This expectation gives joy to my heart. Especially, my dear Miss L., I do earnestly desire that Boston may be visited with one of those vivifying and refreshing showers which causes the church to look forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. No blessing of a temporal nature—the increase of corn, and wine, and possessions, can be compared with it. This, if we are christians, we must not only acknowledge, but feel. Lamentable inconsistency, that, feeling and acknowledging it, we do so little to effect it! A few feeble desires avail nothing; our desires are equal, and only equal, to our efforts, for in every thing else, we judge of the strength of desire by what is actually attempted. How then can we talk of desires for the advancement of true religion, when we do nothing to promote its extension? Oh that a spirit of earnest longing and of efficient doing, might be poured out upon professors in that dear metropolis where God has cast our lot.

TO ANOTHER FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Auburn, June 28, 1817.

There has been a great deal of rain since we left home; our journey has however been, on the whole, a pleasant one. My last letter was from Saratoga Springs, more than one hundred and fifty miles from this. We are surprised to find, how universally this State is peopled, upon this road. It is quite amusing to think, how little I was prepared to find a country, thirty years ago a wilderness, more generally settled than some parts of our own State, for instance, between Brookfield and Northampton. Thus far we have, every mile, seen cultivated lands, fine orchards, and good houses. Many of the buildings are constructed with a neat and simple elegance, which is very gratifying to the traveller. We have been much pleased with some of the houses of worship. The land appears, generally, to be very fertile, and seems to promise a liberal return for the labors of the husbandman.

We passed the settlement of the Oneida Indians yesterday. You recollect that Mr. Kirkland was formerly Missionary among them. Their present Minister is a Mr. Williams, who, I hear, is a very worthy man. It is curious to see how scrupulously they adhere to their ancient dress and customs, though in the midst of a civilized people.

Auburn is quite a pretty village, something city-like in its appearance. Mr. Huntington has gone to call on the Presbyterian minister while I am writing. We are told there is a revival in his congregation, and that his house is filled, on the Sabbath, with anxiously attentive hearers. As to-morrow will be the Sabbath, we expect to hear him preach, and see his congregation.

Canandaigua, July 2. I intended to have finished my letter before, but could not. We were much pleased with the appearance of the congregation with which we worshipped, at Auburn, on the Sabbath. There is evidently a work of the Spirit among them. Between forty and fifty have obtained hope since the commencement of the revival. The subjects of the work are, as is usually the case, mostly young people. The minister seems to be much engaged. It was truly delightful to spend a Sabbath in such circumstances.

The roads have been so bad the last few days, that I feel quite fatigued, but hope I shall hold out to the end of our journey. How the hurried, noisy, and dissipated life some people lead, can be comfortable, I see not. Tranquillity is as necessary to my happiness, as bustle seems to be to theirs. A constant round of incidents and company is very distressing to my mind. And, what is especially to be lamented, it is with great difficulty that I can, in such circumstances, keep up any savor of divine things.

I have just received a letter from our beloved H. As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from those we love. There is nobody, after all, like our dear folks at home. May God bless them and us, and make us all blessings to each other. I seem to love you better for this temporary separation. Pleasing is the hope of soon meeting you again. But how much more pleasant, how cheering, is the hope of meeting in heaven! God forbid that any of us should come short of it.

TO ANOTHER FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Herkimer, July 18, 1817.

I fear you have begun to think me rather remiss in acknowledging the receipt of your letter several weeks ago. As I am certain, however, that you will not charge such remissness to the want of affection on my part, I shall only say, I have been going from one place to another so constantly, that I have been unable to write as frequently as I wished. Since my letter to Miss P., from Canandaigua, we have been to the Falls, through Buffalo; and, I must say, have been more gratified than I expected to be. The country the whole distance, with a few exceptions, is delightful. The ride from Black Rock, on the Canada side, to the Falls, is on the banks of the Niagara river; and this circumstance is sufficient to make it interesting. Add to this, that it was the seat of a considerable part of the last war, and you will readily believe that it must be highly interesting. We saw spots on the grass of *deep* green, fertilized with human blood and bones unburied.—As to the Falls, I shall not hazard a description of them; they are grand beyond description.

Our journey has been a very pleasant one. We have been highly gratified with the appearance of things, in many parts of this State, in a religious point of view. We did not expect to see flourishing churches of two and three hundred members, and to behold the people flocking in crowds to the sanctuary, three times on the Sabbath, in this wilderness, as we had considered it. In many places religion is almost the only topic of conversation. I was particularly interested in our visit at Geneva, a most beautifully situated village, sixteen miles this side of Canandaigua. The good people there, seemed to think religion was in a dull and languid state among them. But I thought I found there a great deal of the very life and soul of it. Some of the ladies will, I hope, follow our example, and form a Maternal Association. At Buffaloe there is more than a usual attention to religion.

Buffaloe is a delightfully situated place, on the bay, or whatever else it is called, where the waters of Lake Erie enter the Niagara river. It is really very pleasant to see such a city-like place, grown up, as if by enchantment, on the extremity of our western frontier. There is but one house, a log one, standing now, which survived the fire two years ago. The whole village beside was consumed. The people are still rather depressed by their late calamities, and have been somewhat straitened in building a house for public worship. They hope to receive some remunertion for their losses from the government. Canandaigua is an elegant village; there is scarcely a poor house in the place.

Has any thing of consequence transpired among you, or any of the churches since we left Boston? Soon, I hope, we shall see our dear home. Oh that we might find such a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord there, as has lately been experienced in some of the towns through which we have passed!—How are our dear little ones? The Lord be their keeper, and preserve them from harm! Write me all about them, and direct to Worcester. Remember me most affectionately to all whom you know I love, and that is very many. Tell the children that we shall soon be home, if it please God. Kiss them all for us.—And now, my dear friend, adieu. May God be our God, and the God of ours, our guide and portion unto death!

TO HER MOTHER, AT KILLINGWORTH, CONN.

Boston, August 8, 1817.

We arrived at home last night, and had the great comfort of finding our dear little ones in usual health; which is a peculiar mercy, for I am told it is quite sickly in town. I hope this will find you more comfortable than you were when I left Killingworth.* Oh my dear mother, I did not expect to see you so much altered and enfeebled. But I hope that God is dealing with you in covenant love; and if so, all your trials will be the means of fitting you more perfectly for the kingdom of heaven. It is a great thing to grow better by suffering. God sends judgments upon his children, to wean them from the world and from sin, and to make them more like himself. I hope you will find that God is an unfailing refuge in every time of trial. My dear mother, do not be discouraged, but carry all your sorrows to Him by whose power all things are controlled. He will not suffer you to be tried above what he will enable you to bear. Trust in the Lord Jehovah, with whom is everlasting strength. Those that wait on him, shall renew their strength, they shall never faint. Though he may see that his children need the rod, and, if I may use the expression in reference to him, be constrained, in faithfulness, to visit them with it; yet, blessed be his name, to them, he always tempers the stroke with mercy.

I long, dear mother, to have you enjoy again the light of God's countenance, which will make all your burdens light.

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* Her mother was, at this time, afflicted with great bodily weakness, and with unusual spiritual darkness. From the latter, she was soon mercifully delivered, and continued to enjoy peace of mind till the close of life.

Keep near, I entreat you, to Him who is a sun and shield to his people. Wait upon him by constant prayer and supplication. Let sister read the bible to you every day. Some of the sweet psalms of David are exactly suited to your case. He was, more than once, afflicted and ready to die, he was chastened sore; yet he was not delivered over to spiritual death. The God whom he loved, in his heaviest hours, sanctified to him the overwhelming calamities, which sometimes seemed ready to swallow him up; and he could say, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof," i. e. though the heaviest calamities befal us. Happy, happy man! What real evil can touch those who have such confidence in their Maker? Some of Rippon's hymns have been very precious to you in times past; let them be read to you now.

Dear mama, strive to profit by the rod. Let sin be made more hateful to you by it, for this is the procuring cause of all sorrows. And try to glorify God in your tribulations. If his glory is near our hearts, our comfort and salvation are near his. There is one thing you can do. Say not that you live in vain. How much may you do by your prayers? Does not your own soul need them? Do not your children in Killingworth need them? Do not we need them? Does not Zion need them? So long as christians can pray, they may do more good in the world, than the greatest of unsanctified heroes and conquerors. And now, my dear mother, adieu. May the God of mercy bless you, and prepare us to meet in heaven, for his dear Son's sake.

September 6. I think we are happy just in proportion as we are humble. When true humility possesses our souls, we are not wounded by the indifference of others, because we feel that we are still treated more honorably than we deserve; neither do afflictions overwhelm us, because we feel that there is still much more occasion for gratitude than for complaint. Oh for the spirit of Jesus, who was meek and lowly in heart!

TO A FRIEND IN N. H.

Boston, September 23, 1817.

When have you heard from Charleston? The sickness there makes me very anxious about our beloved Mary. Dear girl! were she to fall a victim to this distressing epidemic, how many hearts would bleed, how irreparable would be the loss to her family! But I hope that the God, who has repeatedly carried her through the most trying scenes, will still spare her, to contribute, by her pious and disinterested exertions, to the comfort of those friends who had so often looked to her for it. I should feel her death deeply, for she has been to me a friend peculiarly suited to be useful in seasons of adversity; and how few such there are. Does her mother know how much danger she is in? If she does, in her feeble state, how greatly must she be afflicted. But so it is in this world. We must look only to heaven for uninterrupted rest. Happy they who have attained that measure of faith which enables them to trust undismayed, in the unchangeable goodness and perfect wisdom of Jehovah, when assailed by calamity. When you hear from Charleston, do let me know. I dread to look over the weekly list of deaths, lest a dear name should meet my eye.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, September 24, 1817.

Oh, my dear E., little did I think, when I wrote last, that my anxious inquiries were to be answered so soon, and to receive such an answer. Your letter, containing the melancholy, the heart-rending tidings,* has just been received.—And why should I say heart-rending tidings? Shall that be deemed heart-rending, which is so unutterably for her advantage and felicity? But when I think of her dear mother, feeble and broken, wanting just such a steady arm as hers to lean upon; when I think of the dear sister whom she has left in a land of strangers; when I think of the Church which had her fervent, daily prayers, such prayers as not many offer on earth; when I think of myself, the tender sympathy she felt for me in affliction, the undissembled and faithful affection she bore me, which survived years of separation, and bore with all my frailties and follies; and then reflect that her friendship, her efforts, her prayers, for me, for others, for the church, are all at an end; how can I help mourning, bitterly mourning? Oh God of mercy, let her mantle fall on us who remain! Let something of that meek, prayerful, holy, Christ-like spirit, which distinguished her, be communicated to us, and abide with us continually. Alas! little did I think she was going to Charleston to find her grave. But she died as she lived, magnanimously, disinterestedly, and cheerfully sacrificing her own desires and comforts, for others. And the righteous God will recompense, is recompensing her for it.

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* Of the death, at Charleston, S. C. of Miss Mary Lyon, who had long been one of her most intimate and endeared friends.

Oh that my affections may be now detached from that world, which God would make more indifferent to me, by lopping from it my comforts, one after another! What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness! It will be but a little time that we shall occupy a place among the living. Our friends are going into eternity very fast, and we that remain must live here as mourners. And if as mourners, our hearts will not settle very permanently on the empty shades of this dying world.

TO HER MOTHER AT KILLINGWORTH.

Boston, December 16, 1817.

My dear mother. We received a letter from sister S., a short time since, informing us of your circumstances, which, we most truly rejoice to hear, were then so comfortable. How much reason have you for everlasting gratitude to God for his gracious manifestations of himself to you! I long to hear that you are still rejoicing in his soul-comforting, soul-sanctifying presence; that you are still enabled to say, This God is my God; and he will be my guide and portion until death. Dear, very dear mama, how it comforted my heart to be informed of the comfort which you received. God is faithful. He is a strong tower, into which the righteous runneth, and is safe. Trust him; and, in every extremity, you will find him a sure and unfailing resting-place.

Oh the blessedness of having God for our helper! But we must keep near to him. If his children transgress and forsake him, he removes that light in which they live, and they are overwhelmed with sorrow. How much comfort do we lose by slackening our diligence in duty, and neglecting to watch against sin?

> How oft have sin and Satan strove
> To draw my heart from him I love.

And, alas! how successfully, is the mournful language of every christian.

But, my dear mother, there is a world, where sin shall assault us no more; where the song of victory shall never be interrupted by regrets and lamentations, where progress in knowledge and bliss shall be rapid, unceasing and endless. Blessed world! does not the hope of it make the trials, the sufferings, the conflicts, the wrestlings of this, comparatively easy? For that world, my mother, I believe you are preparing. Oh! keep heaven much in view. It will strengthen you to overcome those legions of corruptions, against which every christian must fight till he dies. Be daily and hourly committing yourself to Him who is mighty to save; who can, who, if you look to him, certainly will, strengthen you, to resist every sin, endure every pain, and bear every trial, to his glory. What a blessed thing to glorify God, in any way which he appoints! It is better to glorify God than to possess worlds! And this you may do. This you will do, if you go out of yourself and seek all your supplies of grace and strength immediately from Christ! for he will then enable you to do it. Dearest mother! may the God of mercy bless you! May the Savior of sinners wash and justify you! May the Holy Ghost sanctify you wholly, in soul, body and spirit! And may you, and your unworthy child, spend an eternity together, in wondering at the grace which has saved us.

December 25. My dear husband has been confined, about a fortnight, with a rheumatic fever. He is on the recovery, but is very weak. When he was first seized, I think I felt it a pleasant thing to glorify God, in just that course of his providence which he should appoint, and that my present business was, cheerful acquiescence in his will, and an humble and faithful performance of the duties immediately resulting from this affliction. I think the confinement and the fatigue looked comparatively welcome, because they were the Lord's allotment. Especially I felt that I deserved the chastisement, and therefore could receive it with submission. But for a few days past, it has seemed as if Satan and my own corruptions were ready to swallow me up. I have been tossed with a tempest, and not comforted. My heart-sins have never seemed to me so dreadful as of late.

And shall I give up the pursuit of holiness? Shall I cease to struggle for the victory over my formidable enemies? Shall I say, my hope is perished from the Lord? Oh my God! where shall I find rest but in thy love? Thou mightest justly abandon me. But, do I not love thee? Does not my soul cling to thee as its only hope? Does not thy law appear to me holy, just, and good; and conformity of soul to it, as more to be desired, than the actual enjoyment of all those dreams of earthly felicity with which mankind deceive themselves to perdition? Oh help me; Jesus, my strength, help me! Let not my corruptions swallow me up! Answer me speedily, blessed Savior; lest I become like them that go down to the pit!

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. Y.

Boston, December 19, 1817.

The state of things here, in a religious point of view, is brightening. Much is doing, in various ways, for promoting the influence of truth. And we do hope, we think not without reason, that there will soon be seen here, an increase of real Christianity, more remarkable than has been experienced in Boston for a long time.—What is the state of things in New-York now? Does party spirit run as high as ever? I do not much wonder that some persons, seeing the bitterness of such religionists against each other, should be led to think there is nothing in religion. But let them, as they certainly ought to do before they decide, examine the Scriptures with impartiality, and they will find that the "wars and fightings," among christians, differing only in non-essentials, proceed, not from the religious principle, but from those sinful "lusts," which the christian religion most pointedly condemns. The fruits of the Spirit, the fruits of genuine Christian principle, are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.

TO HER SISTERS* AT KILLINGWORTH, CONN.

Boston, January 10, 1818.

My dear sisters. The long-expected, but melancholy and afflictive tidings of our beloved mother's dissolution, reached me on Wednesday last. The stroke has fallen; and we are without a parent. But the Psalmist says, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Oh to be taken up, to be adopted, taken into God's family; to have him exercise over us the endearing, the watchful, the vigilant attention and care of an omniscient and almighty Parent! But in order to this, something is necessary on our part. As God promises to be the husband only of the "widow indeed," so he promises to be the Father only of the orphan indeed; of those who, disclaiming all other dependence, fly to him, through Jesus Christ, as their best, their only portion; who feel the vanity of all human helpers; who love him with a filial and holy love; and who manifest their attachment by a hatred of sin, which he hates, by a pursuit of the holiness he enjoins, by a life of unreserved obedience to his law. For how can we love God, if we are careless of offending him? How can we, for a moment, think we love him, if we allow ourselves in any thing he hates? "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." My dear sisters, can we, with these passages of Scripture before us, appeal to our Master and future Judge, as Peter did, and say, "Lord! thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee?" If so, then are we the children of God, heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; then are we preparing for heaven; then our God will lead us in a right way, to the city of habitation; he will smooth the path of life, or give us strength to surmount every difficulty of the way, accompanying every cross with his blessing; and ultimately bring us to the heavenly Jerusalem, the inner temple of his glory, to the full and endless enjoyment of himself in heaven.

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* Children of her mother, but not of her father.

Is it so, my beloved sisters? Dust and ashes, pollution and guilt as we are, does the infinite Jehovah allow us to indulge such a hope as this! And can we live in sin? Can we live without panting after grace to glorify Him much, from whom we have received all? Can we go on, day after day, and month after month, doing nothing for his glory, for his cause, for his people? Time flies. We are drawing near eternity. Our friends are, in rapid succession, called away. Our turn must soon come. And, oh! my heart is full while I think of it, what are we doing to make life pleasant in the retrospect, to give calmness and serenity to the dying hour, to make eternity happy? What are we doing, which evinces our hope to be that which maketh not ashamed, and which will receive the Master's gracious reward? These are inquiries in which we are all *deeply* concerned. Alas! what bitter self-reproaches do they cause me to feel. Oh! for grace to have our lamps trimmed and burning, and to be waiting for the coming of our Lord.

January 12, 1818. Since writing last in my journal, Mr. Huntington has so far recovered as to go to New London, and I have heard the mournful tidings of my dear mother's death. My mind was very deeply affected by this event at first; and I felt that my only refuge was that strength of my Almighty Savior, for which I have so often pleaded, with particular reference to these distressing providences. I think I felt that his grace supported me. But to-night I am called to weeping and lamentation, not for the death of another friend, but for my sins. These are so numerous and so powerful, that I groan, being burdened. I have to contend with legions of inward enemies, who are ready to devour all that is in me of uprightness and holiness. Especially a spirit of selfishness, which creeps into all my duties and desires, poisoning and polluting all, has been to-night, extremely distressing. My heart is pained within me for deliverance. This temper is as opposite to the temper of heaven, as any thing that can be supposed. It is the prolific parent, from which proceed the murmurings and envyings, the strife and debate, the whisperings and backbitings, and the nameless host of evil passions, which distract the world and agonize the people of God. In my own case, the outward manifestation has been graciously prevented; but God knows, how like a fierce lion, though bound I humbly hope, it has been raging in my heart, and striving for the victory. And shall I be one day delivered? Yes, if I ever reach heaven. How inexpressibly delightful is the prospect! Blessed God,let me not come short of this rest.

17. I feel an ardent desire to redeem the time more faithfully. The greater part of my past life looks like a miserable waste of this precious talent. How little that was purely religious have I done! Though my life has been active, alas! it has not been active for God. I long to reduce my religious principles to a system, that shall make them bear upon all that I do. This would not be so extremely difficult if my heart was right. Oh! when will the time come, that I shall do more faithfully the work to which God has called me? When shall I have a constant reference to divine things, in the daily round of my duties?

21. I think I have felt to-day, some strength of purpose to follow hard after God, till these legions of in-dwelling sins are subdued. How inexpressibly delightful heaven looks, where they never, never sin! But, oh! can such an one as I, hope for this blessedness? If this vile heart is a temple of the Holy Ghost, God will at last lay the top-stone, amidst the shoutings of, Grace, grace unto it, from both angels and men. Let me then take courage, apply for strength to my great High Priest, and not faint in the time of trial. God will not suffer me to perish by the hands of my enemies. Let me resolve to wrestle, and strive, and agonize against my sins, and never give over the conflict till I have obtained the victory. Keep me waiting on thee, O Thou help of my soul! and I shall receive courage, and shall conquer.*

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* In this extract, it may not be amiss to remark, is exhibited the legitimate influence of the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. "It is not designed to comfort even true Christians, in sloth and lukewarmness; it being much better for them, in such a state, to be put in great fear; but to cheer the diligent, active, thriving Christian, in his conflict with Satan and the corruptions of his own heart; that while fighting, animated by the assurance of victory, he may fight manfully, when otherwise he would be discouraged by fears lest all should be in vain." The legitimate, and, when rightfully received, the certain influence of the doctrine, therefore, is, to make diligent, active, and thriving Christians. See letters and papers of the late Rev. Thomas Scott, D. D., first Boston edition, p. 262.

22. If I am not deceived, I do feel the preciousness of a throne of grace, something of a contrite spirit in view of myself, and a sincere desire never, never again to sink into that dreadful worldly frame, in which I have been of late, but from which, forever blessed be his name! God has granted me a partial deliverance. My heart is affected by the long-suffering and forbearance of my God. I do long to be an humble, obedient child. My prevailing emotions are, I think, grief and sorrow that I am not more humble and broken-hearted. The tears of penitence are refreshing tears, yes, they are refreshing tears. Oh, to shed more of them, to weep for my sins from my inmost soul! And now, oh my Helper! give me strong purpose of mind, and assist me with thy almighty grace, to cleave unto thee henceforth and forever!

23. I still feel a sweet calm within! can go to God the Father, as my reconciled Father and Friend, to God the Son, as my compassionate and almighty Redeemer, to God the Spirit, as my Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide. I feel a strong desire to hate sin more, to resist it more, to watch against its first aim at dominion, to strike a firm and effectual blow against its power, and its very existence in my heart. Blessed Spirit!

I hate the sins which made thee mourn,
And drove thee from my breast!

February 12. What a poor, dying world is this! Strange I should ever feel at rest here, as if this were my home, and my dear enjoyments were secured to me for a long time to come! My friends are all dying, or losing friends; and we are all hastening to eternity, fast, very fast.—I am anxious about my dear husband. His lungs have been very tender of late; he has a severe cold, and is afflicted with a pain in his side. These things, viewed in connexion with his numerous and arduous duties, alarm me much. But, I desire to leave all with God! He hath done, he will do, all things well. Such an event as my husband's death, the almighty grace of God alone could prepare me for, or carry me through. The very thought seems too burdensome for a worm like me. But, whatever of trial my God may call me to in this vale of tears, I can only plead that he will sustain me, and enable me to glorify his holy name.

March 9. I have heard a remark to-day respecting myself, calculated to give, and which has actually given, me pain. It was that I could not bear to be contradicted. I am sincerely desirous to profit by this observation. I hope it will not be lost. I pray God to enable me to improve by it. I want to feel a noble, Christian superiority to human opinion, when it clashes with duty, infringes upon the claims of my Master, or is, in any way, a snare to me in my progress heavenward. And I long, when there is any ground for the strictures which others make upon me, to be enabled to turn them to profit, and to redouble my watchfulness over myself. And, alas! alas! how much is there to mend which the world does not see! I am overwhelmed with confusion, in view of some parts of my past life. Oh! to live more holily and unblameably, in time to come!

11. It is a common remark, that the characters of men are, for the most part, pretty justly appreciated; that the decisions which are passed upon them, by the great tribunal of public opinion, are usually a safe standard for the formation of private judgment. This may be true in general; and yet, I am inclined to think, there are many exceptions to the rule. A man may have the reputation of being generous. And why? Because, in a few showy and popular instances, he has been so; while his private life may have been marked with all the bitterness of a mean and parsimonious economy. The world are apt to judge of a man's character by a few splendid acts, or lamentable miscarriages. This is especially the case with those, who are not accustomed to follow the man, with the accuracy of a discriminating observation, to his family, where the stimulus of public inspection has subsided, and see what he is there.

I think it can never be pressed too earnestly upon the young, that character is not what a person does or is, once a year, or once in half a dozen years, but what he is and does habitually. A very generous man may, from mistake, or from some other cause, do what will appear the excess of littleness. A very meek man, may from the pressure of perplexing circumstances, get so much off his guard, as to utter things unadvised and improper, which he would weep tears of blood to recal. A very humble man may be placed, by the imputation of charges which he knows to be false, in a situation so irksome, as to induce him to defend himself, with a tone and manner, entirely foreign from the general disposition and habit of his mind. Now these striking overt acts, are often those which are laid hold of by the world, and determine its judgment upon character. It is extremely important that children should be early taught to distinguish between appearances and realities; else they will be continually in danger of adopting the egregious follies and palpable corruptions of persons, whose few splendid virtues may have excited their admiration, and of avoiding an acquaintance with persons the most worthy, because a few weaknesses or inconsistencies appearing in their behavior, have produced disgust. Nothing, in such a world as this, can be more foolish than to renounce a friend, because we have found him to be imperfect.

April 4. I have lately had many fears that my heart has never been thoroughly humbled, that I have never been made to see the righteousness of God in threatening eternal punishment as the reward of sin, especially of my sins. I fear I have never seen the real desert of sin. This I esteem exceedingly important. I am apprehensive that though many say they feel that they deserve everlasting misery, it is often an inconsiderate assent to a generally acknowledged truth, rather than an inwrought conviction, produced by the Holy Spirit. I long to have my mind more enlightened on this subject. Yet, the government of God appears to me a most righteous, holy, wise, benevolent, and perfect government. I think I rejoice in it. If I do not, I cannot say what I rejoice in. I think I see and feel that the blessed God could not, consistently with the honor of his law, and the welfare of his kingdom, take the sinner to heaven in an unsanctified state. The idea of never obtaining the rest that remaineth for the people of God, of never being conformed to the image of my Savior, is heart-rending. I have not taken up my rest in this world. I do long for holiness, for the holy employments and joys of heaven. In giving up the hope of being made complete in the likeness of God, it seems to me, that I should give up all that makes life supportable.

8. The case of our dear church and people has lain upon my mind this morning, with even more weight than that of my own children. I feel that I must plead earnestly and perseveringly with God, that he will be pleased to glorify himself in the spirituality and enlargement of this church. Oh! that it may be a pure, strong, and beautiful temple of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some particular circumstances have thrown a shade over my mind. But I do feel as if I could follow after God to overrule whatever appears dark or unpropitious, not only for his own glory, but for our spiritual good. And oh! that he would be graciously pleased to spare my dear husband, and enable him to gather in the spiritual harvest that appears to be at hand. Twenty or thirty in our congregation are inquiring. Lord! disappoint not our hopes. Purge out and destroy whatever does, or would, hinder the work! And pour out a blessing upon us, till there shall not be room enough to receive it!

May 2. I have enjoyed some comfortable manifestations of Christ, as the Intercessor of his people, which have diffused a precious tranquillity over my mind for many days. To think of him as the spiritual Aaron, who, having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, now stands, and will ever stand, in the inner temple, to bear all the names and cases and wants of his people, as Aaron bore on his breastplate the names of the twelve tribes, is sweet indeed.

TO A BROTHER-IN-LAW, AT B.*

Boston, May, 1818.

You ask how I like Cecil's Remains. Much, for the most part. But there appears to have been something of severity in his character, something more of the *determined* scholar, than the *amiable* Christian.

I am not pleased with his remarks upon my sex. This, you will say, is a matter of course. However, if I am not deceived, I object to his insinuations, not as a woman, but as a Christian, as a member of God's universal family, and as a friend to the interests of both sexes; having, I humbly believe, learned, in view of this subject, to cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and to feel that if any one would be honorable in God's view, he must be willing to become nothing.

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* This extract was published in the Boston Recorder, of June 2, 1818.

In his remarks on the marriage of ministers, Mr. Cecil says, "A minister must stand on his own ground when associating with women, and not descend to mingle among them." "Thought is the characterizing feature of men, and feeling of women." By the first remark, does Mr. C. intend to say that a minister must not bring himself to a level with the giddy, the volatile, the thoughtless, of our sex? Or does he mean that all women are so? My opinion has been, that, by cultivating habits of rational intercourse between the sexes, the real good of both parties would be promoted; that the men would become more social and refined, without losing their strength, and the women more sound, without losing their gentleness.

Is not the tendency of the above remarks likely to be unfavorable to both sexes? Are they not calculated to produce in the minds of men, an overweening opinion of their own importance, a loftiness of spirit, contrary to the temper of the meek and lowly Jesus, and inimical to the growth of religion in the soul? Are they not likely to be equally deteriorating in their influence on the female mind? Will not the women infer that, if the case be so, it is not necessary for her to cultivate her mental powers; that she may as well confine her views and her thoughts, so far as she thinks at all, to that contracted sphere comprehended under that general term *self*, as to endeavor to expand her benevolence by enlarging her knowledge? Will she not be in danger of becoming the despicable slave of a morbid sensibility which she has not learnt to control, by being told that she was made for feeling rather than reflection? Alas! how can woman, subject to the accumulated vexations of outward temptation and constitutional frailty, be expected to endure the evils of life with firmness, when the whole tendency of her education has been to enervate the energies of the mind, induce loose habits of thinking, and undermine the government of reason?

But the chief objection I have to Mr. Cecil's remarks on this subject is, that they are calculated to deprive women of that respect in their own families, which is necessary to the proper management of children. Now this I deem of incalculable importance. Let the sons of a family lose their respect for their mother, and it will be utterly impossible for a substitute for natural authority to be found. I do not hesitate to say, (and I do not say it rashly, or without much examination of the subject,) that those families, where the character of the mother is depressed to that of a mere housekeeper, are never well-governed; and that, on the contrary, the sons of those mothers, whose rank in the family authorises them to be counsellors of their children, are in childhood more amiable, and in manhood more worthy, than others. If children are not under the government of their mothers, they must necessarily be left very much to their own guidance, and exposed to early associations unfriendly to virtue. Their characters will be mostly formed by the influence of adventitious circumstances; unless, indeed, the father can oversee them constantly, which is rarely the case. The father requires the boy to obey his mother, and perhaps gives him long lessons on the subject; but of how much weight they will be, in turning the scale between duty and inclination, when the child sees that the father does not respect her himself, it requires but little sagacity to conjecture. The habit of trifling, of dissimulation, and of rebellion, is thus acquired; and, if grace effects an alteration in the state of the heart afterwards, it certainly operates under circumstances unfavorable to its growth.

There is also another evil resulting from the opinion above stated. It is the interruption of domestic peace. Such an opinion introduces pride, and pertinacity, and imperiousness, on the one hand, and jealousy and enmity on the other, among brothers and sisters; and, in this way, is destructive of the best principles and affections of our nature.

There are those who think, that if women are treated as equals, they will aspire to dominion, or will not "be in subjection, with reverence," to their husbands. I am of a contrary opinion. We can never yield unwillingly, when we think the duty of doing so is unquestionable. But we always give with the worst grace what is extorted. We are always the most generous, when left free. The enlightened obedience of a sensible woman is consistent, because it is the dictate of reason; it is seen to be necessary in the constitution of things, and for the preservation of order in the various departments of the creation of God.

The capricious subjection of a weak and ill-informed woman is that of a slave; and, not being properly conceived of, in the first place, is likely to be disputed, or submitted to with reluctance.

But nothing can be more idle than to dispute the point of equality with our brethren. Time is too short to waste in this way. And besides, by society at large, every individual will, generally, be respected in proportion to his merits. If we would have influence, we must prove, in the first place, that we deserve it. But every one in his order. The moment a woman steps out of her proper sphere, she ceases to be, in proportion to her deviation from the path prescribed her, either amiable or respectable. And, in my judgment, were women blessed with an enlightened education, and taught to view the subject of female subordination in a philosophical and scriptural way, they would, not only be much greater helpers and blessings to their husbands and children, but in much less danger of usurping that authority which God and nature have delegated to the other sex.

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

New-Haven, July 21, 1818.

My dear Mrs. ——, "Be not faithless, but believing," is an injunction, obedience to which would contribute as much to our happiness, as to the glory of God. But, though I fear the state of my mind is not more distinguished by the grace of faith than when I left Boston, I do not feel the same anxious solicitude about my family which I did then. The mind, I suppose, cannot be strongly exercised on one subject, when it is constantly and powerfully affected by many separate and remote interests. I have been passing so rapidly from one scene to another, and have felt so many different emotions since I left home, that I have scarcely had an opportunity to be anxious. While I was at New-London, my time was entirely occupied with attentions to our sick father; and since I left that place, I have been scarcely less engaged.

I fear, my dear friend, that I shall return, knowing that I have done little or no good on my journey. Were it not that I do not like speaking about myself, I could fill my sheet with an account of my great stupidity and unfruitfulness. But it would do no good. And, as such complaints are often mistaken for humility, it is, perhaps, well to make them but seldom. To our Christian friends we may, to be sure, speak of our spiritual sorrows, without much danger of being misunderstood. I believe Christians, in general, are lamentably deficient in *living* the religion they profess. It is easy to talk; it is not difficult to profess; but to *do*,—to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God, is quite another thing. When we compare our feelings with the experience of prophets and apostles, how faint a resemblance do we find? And yet, religion is the same now as ever—the demands of God as universal, and our obligations as great and binding.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

New-London, August 4, 1818.

My dear E., When I took up my pen, I hesitated for a moment, whether my letter should be for Boston or New Haven. Inclination for the latter prevailed. I will not say, New-Haven friends were never so dear to me as now. That were idle. But I may say, that I feel an awakened interest in them at present, which a long separation from them had, perhaps, somewhat blunted. I think an occasional visit to a place we have once loved, and which is the residence of early friends, is desirable, to keep alive, if not the enthusiasm of youthful attachments, those warmer endearments of the heart, by which it discriminates some places, and some persons, from the rest of the world.

I have been thinking, my dear friend, about the weakness of your eyes. I am sorry you should be tried in this way upon your first setting out in life. And yet, if you are a Christian, God loves you infinitely better than I do; and he might prevent it, if he chose. Now if he does not prevent it, he sees that you could not do without this trial. When you can, he will remove it. O how sweet is the reflection, that the work of the Lord is "perfect;" that all his ways are faithfulness and mercy; that all his dispensations shall work together for good to them that love him! —As to this world, we shall both experience many interesting, and, perhaps, what may be deemed adverse, vicissitudes. But, if they ripen us for a place at God's right hand, it is well. While we can look at the things which are not seen and eternal, every burden will be enlightened, every sorrow sweetened. If we are Christians, we are passing through a wilderness to heaven; and though God may give us many precious comforts here, it is but a wilderness still. I long habitually to view it so; to realize my mercies, to enjoy them rationally; but to feel that while I am at home in the body, I am absent from the Lord.

September 5. *At Boston.* O how time flies! And how many painful scenes have I passed through, since I last wrote in my journal! I have been particularly tried in the death of Mrs. C., a member of our church, a woman very dear to my heart, and a lovely Christian. I have also been seven weeks in Connecticut, to visit my husband's sick, and, I fear, now dying, father. We left him better. But he is again worse; and Mr. Huntington has been again called to him, and is now there. I am expecting every day, either to hear that his father is mending, or to receive a summons to New-London. I have been somewhat dejected in mind, of late, from another cause. My husband's health is feeble; and the fear that he will have to leave Boston, or soon die under his labors here, has hung as a heavy weight upon my heart.

And now what shall I say? Constituted, as I am, with strong feelings, susceptible nerves, and a heart prone to forebode evil, what should I do without religion? This, I often feel, is the only anchor that holds me from drifting into the gulph of despair. Oh! if the religion of Christ were false, as the infidel tries to make us think, what would become of me? Now, when laboring with grief, and, at times, ready to sink, the precious truths of the gospel are sometimes sent to my mind, for my relief, with an efficacy altogether superior to any other sources of consolation. I pillow my aching head on its precious promises, and I find rest. Oh my God, why dost thou thus fly to my relief? Why, wretch that I am! am I not left to my idols? Break, oh break, hard, stony heart, at the long suffering of thy God.

And now Lord! I would trust thee for the future. I would hate and forsake the sins which separate my soul from thee. Blessed Redeemer! wilt thou not strengthen the creature that longs to serve thee more faithfully?

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

New London, September 10, 1818.

My dear H., I arrived here in safety, on Wednesday evening. Our father is more comfortable than I expected to find him; though, pretty certainly, approaching his end. His mind is, as usual, perfectly quiet; and his death is likely to be as peaceful, as his life has been exemplary. I think we can sometimes see the good effects of such a uniform, consistent life of piety, in this world, in a gracious reward, corresponding in its nature to the course of life pursued. Although salvation is, neither wholly nor in part, of work, is it not likely that a careless, worldly life, most commonly, obscures and darkens the spiritual prospects, even of the Christian, in his last moments?

October 5. *At Boston.* My husband is again in New London. His father has gone to his rest. And it is glorious. Oh! to be accounted worthy to enter into that rest! But now is the time for working. Those who diligently do the will of God, may safely leave the disposal of their final state with him. I know that my heart is, beyond all expression, deceitful. But I do long to be able, day by day, to stir myself up to take hold on God in Christ, to keep near to him, to live upon him, and to glorify him in my body and spirit, which are his.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. Y.

Boston, October 12, 1818.

Though all the children must feel the loss of your excellent father, yet dear mother and E.* are the sufferers. Death seems to be almost another thing, where an immediate view of all with which a departed friend was connected is constantly presented to the eye. Yet it is indeed, in itself, heart-rending to behold the vacancies which the hand of death makes in a family, and remember, that the places which once knew the absent one, will know him no more forever. But if we loved God more, and had more faith, we should not be so much affected by these things.

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* A sister-in-law, residing with her widowed mother, at New-London.

Is not the state of your dear father an enviable one? I think I do feel that it is. Who can tell what blessedness it is to be perfectly delivered from sin, to be admitted to the immediate and perfect vision of God; and, what is more, to be made complete in his likeness? Who can tell what blessedness it is, to cast off that body of death which cramps and clogs all our spiritual efforts in this life, to have a sanctified understanding enlarged so as to know even as we are known?

And is all this a cunningly devised fable? Oh no. The Christian knows that his Redeemer liveth; and that, if his hope of being a Christian is not a false one, he shall see him as he is. Christianity pours a flood of light into the dark valley of the shadow of death; tells the soul, about to leave all it loved here, of better friends and better joys in heaven; and enables it to say, "Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ my Lord!" And shall we not labor and pray that this religion may become universal?

You ask about Elizabeth. She is no better. This is indeed a great trial. But I feel that God has made it very light compared with my deserts. We must all have trials; and we should be more anxious to profit by them, than to escape them. If we are Christians, we shall be carried safely through the wilderness, and lodged at last in the promised land. Let us pray for each other, that we may not come short of that rest.

TO ANOTHER SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. L.

Boston, October 12, 1818.

I left New London with deep regret. Not that I flattered myself that I could be any help to my dear friends there, (it being my lot to receive, rather than confer such favors,) but because I felt deeply interested for them in their trying situation. I felt that kind of solicitude which consists in a painful desire to know all that takes place in reference to those we love. But it is no matter now. And if I may be accounted worthy to meet the object of the concern I felt in heaven, it will be enough. Dear sister! if we are heirs of God, and preparing for an inheritance among the saints in light, oh what a meeting will it be! Surely, they that have this hope should endure their trials with patience, and should purify themselves as Christ is pure. If we are Christians, a few more conflicts, and trials, and sufferings, and we also shall be admitted to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. How important that we should "stir ourselves up to take hold on God," lest we perish through our supineness and unbelief.

It is a great thing to be saved. It is a wonderful thing for a sinner to be prepared to spend an eternity with a holy God! May he grant, for his mercy's sake, that the late sorrowful dispensation may be a rod to every one of us, gentle indeed, but efficacious to drive us to Him, who is a rock of defence, a strong tower, a refuge in the hour of trial and death! I feel a strong desire that it may also be sanctified to your church. I wish to have them feel that a mighty one has fallen among them, and that it is necessary that they should plead earnestly with the King in Zion, to let the mantle of this ascended Elijah fall on those who are left behind. The death of such a man is a great loss to the church. But God can raise up many such. He will, however, be inquired of, by his spiritual Israel, to do this thing for them.

Remember me affectionately to our dear mother, and tell her I think much of her, and hope she will find, that the absence of the dear friend who was with her so long, is more than made up, in the presence of that God, who has graciously styled himself the husband and judge of the widow.

> His arm can well sustain
> The children of his love.

October 16. I called in, by accident, as we say, to-day, at a miserable looking house, where I found a poor, afflicted woman, of twenty or twenty-three years of age, whose case affected me much. She has one child three months old, and one eighteen months old; is in miserable health herself; and has an intemperate, unkind husband. She appeared broken-hearted, and almost bereft of reason. She was born in ——, attended Mr M.'s ministry, and was once the subject of serious impressions. But an imprudent marriage has ruined her, at least for this world. She is in a wretched, dirty hovel, with her husband's father and mother, and a flock of miserable children; all of them are addicted to drink; quarrels among parents and children till midnight, are frequent. I saw only the mother-in-law. But the scene I witnessed was an emblem of hell. The poor young woman is in a state little short of despair. She says it is impossible for her to have a moment alone, and that her husband and mother-in-law, will not let her read the bible. She said to me, "Oh! if I could go up and stay at your house but one night!" It seemed as if God had directed us to the place; I hope for good. I cannot keep this poor young creature out of my mind. If God sent us there to be the instruments of saving this soul from death, what a mercy it will be! Oh that the Redeemer would pluck this helpless one out of the jaws of the lion.

TO A FRIEND IN P.

Boston, October 17, 1818.

Must not every Christian feel, that no stripes which his heavenly Father inflicts, are any thing to him, compared with the conflicts he has to maintain with a heart of unbelief, and a nature prone to evil? When we are enabled to look steadily at the things which are not seen and eternal, and what is more, to place our affections upon them, how it smoothes the roughness of this world; how it lightens every burden, and sends us on our way rejoicing!

I do not know, however, but we are in some danger of calculating too much upon our enjoyments *here*, even our spiritual enjoyments. I suppose we should be more solicitous to do the will of God, and glorify him, and benefit those about us, than to obtain even spiritual comfort. Perhaps, however, I am wrong in thus separating duty and comfort, even in contemplation; for *the most direct way, the only effectual way, to obtain and preserve spiritual comfort, is to be diligent and constant in the performance of all known duty.* If we faithfully aim to do the will of God, he will, in his own time and way, make our fidelity yield us the peaceable fruit of righteousness. And should we not be willing, that he should do it in his own time and way? We instruct our children, we pray for them, we pour on them the strength and agony of our solicitude; and then we, probably, expect the comfort of *seeing* some fruit of all this. And we should expect to see it; but in God's time and way. It is ours to labor and pray; all the rest let us leave with him.

The greatest outward trial I have at present, is the state of my dear husband's health. Not that he has any fixed complaint; but he is constantly predisposed to a cold and hoarseness, which, for a minister, in this age and in this climate, is very much to be dreaded. I believe your husband has been affected in this way. Did you not find it more difficult to exercise faith and submission then, than at any other period of your life? "My son," saith God, "despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him." In contemplating the afflictions of life, I feel more afraid of fainting, than of any thing else. Perhaps I actually am in most danger of rebelling, perhaps of despising; for my heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. But I know that I am weak, weakness itself. And were it not for the humble hope that help, my help, is laid on ONE who is mighty, not only for salvation, but for strength, to do, to bear, to suffer, I cannot say where I should go, what I should do.

TO A FRIEND IN N.

Boston, November 3, 1818.

I am unwilling that Mr. B. should return, without bearing to you the expressions of our sincere sympathy in your present affliction, without telling you how truly we are concerned for your sorrow; and that we are not without strong hopes of our dear ——'s final and perfect restoration.* I knew a young lady, several years since, in ——, who was deranged a whole summer, and was restored without the slightest symptom, to my knowledge, of the disease since. I believe I mentioned to you, when we were last at your house, the similar case of ——, of this town. She is now perfectly well.

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* A daughter of the lady to whom this letter was written, was then in a state of mental derangement.

But after all, I know, (may I not say, by experience?) that there is no resting-place, short of a cordial willingness to have God do what he pleases. And is he not worthy to govern? Are not our interests, and those of our dear ones, safer in his hands than they would be any where else? So long as he has infinite love for his children, to will all that he sees to be best for them, and infinite power to execute all the purposes of his will, may he not safely be trusted? And, supposing the worst, suppose it should please God to conduct our dear —— through the whole wilderness of life under the shade of this thick cloud, would not the mercies of the dispensation infinitely outweigh its calamities? Is she not beloved by our heavenly Father? Has he not pledged his honor, that all things shall work together for her good? Is she not graven as a signet upon his heart? Shall she not be led in a right way, the way best for her soul, though it be dark and inscrutable to us? Oh! yes. Surely He, who, for her sake, spared not, but delivered up his own Son, will, with him, also give her all other necessary things. If she is a Christian, as we have good reason to believe she is, God loves her far better than we do; and he could, if he chose, remove this visitation with a word. If he does not remove it, it will be because he has good and merciful reasons for its continuance. "Wherefore, lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." You shall one day see that all this is mercy. Trust in the Lord, and you shall not be desolate.

November 10. There is scarcely a more mortifying subject of contemplation, than the littleness of the sum total of human greatness, compared with the capacity of man. The vast majority of our race, waste their powers in the pursuit of objects, which have little or no reference to the improvement of their intellectual and moral nature. While the man of mere business is pursuing, with a zeal worthy of the Christian's imitation, schemes of personal emolument, his mind, constantly employed within the contracted sphere of pecuniary and interested calculations, becomes almost incapable of taking a free and extensive range of observation. Like the limb enfeebled by want of exercise, it shrinks from every unusual effort; and the disposition to mental exertion declines, as it is found to be laborious.

Though all cannot be supposed to possess equal advantages for the cultivation of the mental faculties; yet most possess advantages which, duly improved, might have advanced them higher in the scale of human greatness than they are. The daily occurrences of life furnish an infinite variety of occasions, upon which the wise may seize as means of improvement. The difficulty is, not so much in not having such means, as in the want of the ability, or the disposition, to profit by them. To teach us how to do this, how to seize upon, and turn to the best account, every means of improvement with which we are furnished by Providence, is, or ought to be, the great end of education. Whatever we have learned, if we have not learned *to think*, so as to be able to advance ourselves in knowledge, by the judicious deductions of reason in reference to our daily circumstances, the most important of all knowledge is wanting, that of knowing how to educate ourselves. And if the mind is not accustomed to think *early*, there is danger that it will never be brought to think at all. How important then, that mothers should make the *communication of ideas* their principal object in instructing their children; and that they should encourage in them a becoming curiosity to know the reasons and uses of things, and induce them to exercise their judgments upon what they have learned. To accomplish these designs, in reference to our children, is indeed no easy task. But are not the benefits to be derived from their accomplishment, of importance enough, and is there not sufficient ground to hope for success, to constitute a claim to more attention, and effort, and prayer, in reference to them, on the part of mothers, than they commonly receive?

18. Pride has been my constant foe, ever since I have hoped I had begun the Christian race; and I fear it ever will be. Once, when I was the mere child of fiction and romance, my ambition was to distinguish myself by poetizing, and shining as an authoress. After I was married, and was taught some sharp lessons, my great desire was to be a good, plain, common-sense woman; a good wife, good mother, good mistress, good Christian. But pride besets me still.

Yet I do hope that I have lately learned some humbling lessons; been made to feel my dependence on God for the exercise of reason, and to receive it daily as a fresh gift at his hand. I do hope pride has appeared more odious to me, more detestable, ungrateful, and abominable, of late, than ever before. Oh that my reason may be used for God; and, if it is used thus successfully, that the consciousness of my infinite obligations to Him, who continues the faculties he gave, may keep me perfectly humble. I want to be clothed with humility. Vain man! What arrogance to talk of having a mind that will not yield to despair! Let thy God drop, for a moment, the hand which sustains thy reason, and where art thou?

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, December 20, 1818.

You will be pleased to learn, that our Christian community is becoming more deeply interested in behalf of the Jews, than it has been heretofore. Two Missionaries are expected to sail in the spring, on an exploring expedition to Jerusalem. Their object is, to ascertain what encouragements exist to the establishment of a missionary station there. It is believed that they will be found sufficient to justify such a measure. All the information we receive respecting the Jews, both in Asia, and in Europe, seems to indicate most clearly, that the present is a time in which they are expecting something remarkable, in a political and religious view, to be done for their nation. Nothing seems to give such a spring to missionary exertion, as an increased attention to the Jews, for we know that their ingathering will be as life from the dead to the Gentiles. Park-Street Church and ours, have agreed to unite in the observance of the Monthly Concert of Prayer, and at each Concert, to take up a collection for the support of one of these Missionaries to Jerusalem. Both churches have also determined, severally, to educate, at least one young man for the ministry, agreeably to the plan proposed in the pamphlet, entitled "The claims of 600,000,000 of Heathen." Cannot you educate one in your church? *Try.*

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, January 22, 1818.

No, my dear friend, I shall not be "tired of your complaints," though I may be pained by your compliments. To be told that we are clever, &c., may be gratifying to our pride, at the same time that it occasions uneasiness, because we know that it is not true.

As to our respective management of our children, you see all your own short-comings, and I see mine; at least some of them. I suppose each of us thinks, that, were our faithfulness weighed in the balance, the scale would preponderate in favor of the other. But it is a great comfort that there is One who knows all our hindrances, and all our efforts, who knows all our weaknesses and discouragements, and who has said, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not." Our discouragements often result from the belief that our difficulties are peculiar to ourselves. If we could only see the conflicts of others, we should often find that their struggles were as painful as our own. Perhaps they may not be called to contend with precisely the same things that we are; but, if their difficulties be of a totally different kind from ours, they are not on that account the less formidable.

For myself, I often feel as if there could not be an individual of our weak and sinful race, more feeble, more helpless, more unable to stand the smallest trial, than I am. These are sad hours. But they may be profitable ones. It is a sweet reflection that He, with whom we have to do, will not break the bruised reed; and that our physical infirmities constitute us such, as well as our moral ones. Yes, he knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust. The great cause of our getting on so heavily, seems to me to be, that we are weak in faith. Would we quietly receive the allotments of God's providence, would we patiently wait for the intimations of his will, would we unreservedly surrender all our interests into his hands, how much happier should we be. There would still be sin to grieve us, to be sure; but a strong faith, though it would not diminish our contrition for our sins, and our concern on account of the sins of others, would take away much of their bitterness. The tears of godly sorrow would not so often be mingled with the sighs of despondency; and the restlessness and anxiety of our hearts, now such obstacles to a state of satisfaction with the government of God, would yield to an humble persuasion that he will do all things well. Oh, my friend, in saying this, I am met with the painful conviction, that I am the person who has more need, perhaps, to pray, Lord, increase my faith! than any one else.

As to the subject of your strong and reasonable solicitude, remember that the hearts of all men are in the hands of the Lord, and he can turn them as the rivers of water are turned. God can work without any human instrument; he can make the languor of debility, and the agonies of disease, effectual teachers and schoolmasters, to bring men to Christ. And he often does. Your desire and anxious concern for the conversion of this dear friend, are rational and proper, so far as they stimulate you to fervency and wrestling in prayer on his account. But if this desire and concern pass over these bounds, if they lead to an anxious state of mind, which enfeebles your health, interrupts your confidence in God, and thus unfits you to pray and labor, either for him, or yourself, or your children, as you otherwise would do, does it not become a hindrance and a snare? It is a difficult case, I know. But your gracious God, on whose kind arms you have hitherto been so mercifully borne, will, even in this trial, put the song of salvation and praise into your lips, and give you the soul you long for; or, if he withholds the evidence of this, he will quiet your heart as that of a weaned child. Be not dismayed. God is a rock; his way is perfect.

You say you are 'easily disheartened.' And do you not think others are so, as well as yourself? Alas! many have been the times that, after my little flock have gone to bed, I have shed bitter tears over the miscarriages and mistakes of the day. I feel that I am not faithful, as I should be, to improve opportunities of doing good in my family, of recommending religion to its members, especially the children. I think we should make it a subject of prayer, every morning, that we may be enabled to seize with wisdom, every opportunity of doing good that may offer through the day. I do remember Wednesday evening.* These seasons have sometimes been very precious to me. This text has been on my mind very sweetly of late, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." I feel, my dear friend, as if God will have respect unto his covenant, and choose the seed of his people as a generation to serve him. I want to have this promise fulfilled all the world over; and I hope it will be before long. Perhaps, if Christian parents are faithful, the millennium will be introduced in this way. And if this be the case, is it not a privilege to be a mother in this day, when there is so great and comforting a prospect that our children will be made stars in the Redeemer's crown?

March 4. I have been in a poor state of health of late. I am now better, but still feeble. Though afflicted, I have experienced much of the Lord's goodness in my illness. O yes, he is always faithful. I can only bear record against myself. I think I have, at times, felt my Savior near me; tasted the sweetness of his love, and the fulness of his salvation. Death has, at times, looked to me sweet, as the harbinger of eternal peace, of unmingled holiness. One day, when I was very much disordered at my breast, the prospect of living seemed to be received by me almost with reluctance. Oh what a glorious prospect has the Christian before him! How precious are the consolations of religion in this world! And what joys in reversion! Yes, my Savior, rivers of pleasure are at thy right hand; and thy love is sweeter than all the enjoyments of millions of worlds. I am happier, a great deal, than I was when my health was better; because I feel, (if I am not deceived, and I believe I am not,) so much more of the blessed influence of religion. Before I was so feeble, I felt as if I must be brought nearer to God. I prayed that I might be drawn near, and kept near to him; if it could be done only by bringing me low, that I might be brought low. Any means seemed welcome, if the end could only be effected. And my prayer was soon answered.

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* On this evening, she and her correspondent had agreed to make each other's children the special subject of their secret prayers.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MATERNAL ASSOCIATION OF P.

Boston, March 14, 1819.

Dear Madam. Your letter of Feb. 9th, to the Maternal Association of Boston, came safe to hand. The expressions of Christian affection towards us, which it contained, could not fail to be gratifying. The apostle well understood the treacherous nature of the human heart, when he exhorted Christians to stir up the gift of God within them for mutual edification. Christians often need to put each other in mind of acknowledged duties: and, as "iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

The subject of your letter, the religious education of our children, is indeed one of the greatest importance. While, on the one hand, we would avoid the error of those who think education can do every thing; we certainly are authorized to conclude, from the whole tenor of revelation, that with the blessing of God, it may do much. The question then, what is a religious education? becomes one of the deepest interest. Is it to have our children baptized, and initiated into a knowledge of the general principles of Christianity? Is it to make them attend upon the regular administration of the word, to catechise them, to remind them of the greatness of their obligations to become holy, and set before them the terrors of the Lord, that we may persuade them to flee from the wrath to come? All this we undoubtedly ought to do. But all this we may do, and yet be found wanting. For we can never too earnestly press upon ourselves the conviction, that education is not what we teach our children in detached periods of time, when we are giving them special instruction, or explaining to them revealed truths; but what we teach them by the silent, but ever-influencing language of our general example. The mother who recommends religion, in her formal instructions to her children, as a thing of the first importance, while, in her own case, it is habitually driven into a corner; who urges on her children, the supreme desirableness of laying up treasures in heaven, while her dearest ones are evinced, by her conduct, to be on earth; who insists on the excellence and importance of meekness, patience, and charity, while she is no way remarkable for the exercise of these graces herself; who descants on the vanity of the world, while she is seen to be a slave to its opinions and fashions; can hardly expect much success from her labors.*

But while we must all weep over our short-comings, while we have occasion to confess to our God, and perhaps, sometimes, to acknowledge to our children, that the evil which we would not, that we do; it should inspire us with courage that we have an High Priest who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who is able to prevent the influences of unallowed miscarriages on the minds and hearts of our little ones. If there be a prevailing desire, and a settled purpose and endeavor, to walk before our house with a perfect heart, may we not indulge the humble hope, that our accidental mistakes, or occasional deviations, from the path of duty, shall not separate his mercy from us and our children?

"The kingdom of God is as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day; and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Here is the sure word for encouragement. The husbandman, who casts his seed into the bosom of the earth, waits in quiet expectation of the harvest. He plants, he waters, he removes carefully the young weeds which appear and endanger the growth of the grain; and, usually, he does not labor in vain. So is the kingdom of God, or his word in the heart. And, in due season, *we* may expect to reap, *if we faint not.*

We must, however, prepare ourselves to meet with many hindrances, to resist many discouragements, to overcome many difficulties. The evils resulting from a nature altogether corrupt, are too potent to be levelled at one blow. Nor must the recurrence of the manifestation of dispositions, which we had hoped were annihilated, or the relapse into sins which we had believed were forsaken, disarm us of resolution and strength to apply, with a steady hand, the proper remedies for these disorders. The disease may be protracted, there may be many relapses; but we must not therefore conclude that it is incurable, and remit our efforts to save its unhappy victim.

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* The reader will find some very judicious remarks on this most important topic, in the Life of Dr. Scott, author of the Family Bible, particularly in the 17th Chapter; and in the Pastoral Address of the General Association of Connecticut, in 1822, published in the Christian Spectator for that year, at p. 491. This document ought to be possessed, and frequently perused, by every Christian parent. An abstract of it was published in the Boston Recorder of Nov. 2, 1822.

We are apt to be impatient to enjoy now the fruit of our prayers and tears. And to desire that our little ones may be early brought into God's covenant, is certainly proper. But we must remember that now is the time for *working*. This is our part: to give the blessing is the Lord's. Let us then strive to do our part faithfully, and perseveringly; and may we not, safely, leave all that remains with him?

With respect to educating a Heathen child, we have long had a quarterly collection, the avails of which have been appropriated to this object. We originally intended, that it should be devoted to the support of a female in India; but in consequence of the difficulty of obtaining such subjects of this charity there, we recently determined to devote it to the education of a female of the Cherokee nation of Indians. We hope the time is not far distant, when the degraded women of the East will be so far emancipated from their present abject condition, as to be suffered, with their fathers and brethren, to stretch out their hands, and lift up their voices, in supplication for the blessings of the Gospel. What mother, what Christian, in view of this subject, must not often breathe forth the prayer, Thy kingdom come?

Our Association have also resolved to spend the last Wednesday in every year, exclusively in prayer, for ourselves, our little ones, the children of the members of other Maternal Associations, and the offspring of all God's professing people.

We hope you remember us, and ours, in your prayers. Oh that our united supplications may come up as incense before the mercy seat; that they may, through the great Intercessor, be heard in heaven, and speedily answered on earth, to the praise of God's glorious grace! Amen and amen.

May 7. Oh 'my God! thou knowest the earnest, the, at times, almost heart-breaking, desires I feel for the conversion of my children. What shall I do, that this end may be attained? Lord, teach me what thou requirest of me in this particular! Especially, make me scrupulously watchful over my own example. Oh God! do I not choose thee for their portion, above all other portions. And wilt thou not give me as I have desired? O hasten, hasten the time of their union, by a living faith, to the Lord Jesus Christ!

TO MISS ——, OF BOSTON.

Boston, June 1, 1819.

My dear ——. I mentioned the subject of our morning's conversation to my husband, whose constitutional reserve on all subjects, and invariable caution on such as this, rendered it proper that I should do so. As his judgment is much better than mine, and as I felt afflicted on your affliction, I could not forbear informing you, that he thinks you have no cause for the great uneasiness you feel. The whole course of your conduct in the affair, he thinks censurable in no respect.

We all fall into errors and inadvertencies in this world; and it is as necessary that we should learn the painful lessons of our ignorance of what is right, and of our great importance in doing it, as other lessons more pleasant. The great thing is, to be made better by them all. You see, my dear girl, that innocent, or at least, comparatively innocent, actions, sometimes subject us to great censure; and that, from persons whom we dearly love. The only way, therefore, to enjoy uniform quiet is, to endeavor, as much as possible, to cease from man, to study what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God, and aim to do it. If we have his approbation, let us strive to view other things as comparatively unimportant. If we aim to prefer his opinion above that of all others, we shall not give him his supremacy in vain. For those that honor him, he will honor.

June 14. How many perplexing circumstances, are continually occurring in this world? In managing a family, how much happens to pain and wound one? I think it is my humble desire to be as a wise legislature to my little province; to enact as few statutes as possible, and those judicious and easy to be observed; to see that all things are done at the proper time, and in the proper way, so far as practicable, that our family may be a quiet, well organized, regular family; to attend to these necessary duties with a meek and quiet spirit; to manifest in all my deportment before my household, much of the meekness of heavenly wisdom. But how difficult is all this! How often do my most conscientious regulations meet with the disapprobation of my domestics! How often are my best motives misapprehended! And, what is worse than all the rest, how often do these things trouble and discompose me, and make me seriously unhappy. I think my heavenly Father knows, that I have a sincere desire to be faithful over my house; that it is my earnest endeavor, to walk before it as a Christian ought to walk. Oh! to be more faithful, and less disheartened at difficulties! Oh, that these little troubles may drive me to a better resting place than this world.

July 19. *Bridgewater.* My husband set out this morning on a journey for his health, which has been very feeble of late. He will probably go as far as Montreal. And I have come with my eldest child, to spend a part, or all, of the time of his absence, here. I shall have leisure for reading, and meditation, and prayer. Nothing will be wanting to enable me to make some progress heavenward, unless, through my perverseness, it be a heart to improve. Lord, enable me by thy grace to fulfil the resolutions I have made, to spend the time in thy fear and service!

August 3. We had yesterday one of the most tremendous and awful thunder-storms I ever witnessed. It seemed as if all the elements were mingling and melting together. It had been preceded by a few days of most oppressive heat. Four barns were struck in this parish; a meeting house in the adjacent one, and four men who were working in it laid senseless, but revived soon enough to extinguish the flames which had communicated to the shavings. I felt quiet and composed, for I realized that Jehovah was riding upon the tempest and directing the storm. I was sensible that the danger was great, and my mind was rendered solemn. But I felt chiefly desirous, that the awful providence might be a quickening one to me; that when the Son of man does come, I may be found ready to meet him.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Bridgewater, August 13, 1819.

Our sufferings are measured out, and our times appointed, by ONE who knows infinitely well how to dispense and order all. It is sweet to feel safe in his hands. And if the children of God, we are safe; and our Father's hand will not inflict one unnecessary stroke. But, oh! the obduracy of these hearts; the almost irresistible disposition existing in us to depart from God! These are the things which render so many stripes and rebukes necessary for us. And shall we not be willing that God should employ the means which he sees to be best adapted to deliver us from sin?

My health has improved surprisingly since I have been in the country. I only want more grace, a strong and practical faith, and that love to Christ which shall make me hate every thing which interferes with my duty to him.

August 20. How high is the Christian's destination! How elevated are the motives from which he professes to act! How exalted is the end he professes to have in view above the little things of this world! And yet, trifles, light as the small dust of the balance, often interpose themselves between him and his ultimate object, and hinder and clog his way to heaven! He feels, perhaps, their insignificance. He laments the weakness or perversion of mind, which alone, could invest them with such power. But, while he acknowledges the littleness of his enemy, he finds himself constantly assailed and frequently vanquished by it. Alas! too often is this the case with me. Careful and troubled about many things, which are not worth a thought! Oh! why do I thus spend my money for that which is not bread, and my labor for that which satisfieth not?

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Bridgewater, August 25, 1819.

It would have given me great pleasure, my dear sister, to have spent some weeks with you this summer, had I not been unwilling to add to your cares, and had I been able to take such a journey, But the goodness of God to me is very apparent in so disposing my circumstances, at the time of my dear husband's departure, as to prevent my thinking of such a visit this season. I could not have borne the fatigue of the journey; and the reports of yellow fever in Boston, so vague as they would have reached me at New London, would have occasioned me inexpressible uneasiness. I have not been without my anxieties here. I brought S.* with me when I came out. About a fortnight ago, I heard that S. A.† had been sick, and sent for her; and yesterday I learnt that little M.‡ was seized on Saturday night, so violently as to endanger her life. Through the mercy of God, the dear child has recovered; but I expect to send for her also to-morrow. I felt last night, as if I had so much more reason to be thankful to my heavenly Father for sparing the life of the child, than to be grieved because he did lay his hand upon her, that the intelligence of her sickness was made very light to me.

Upon every fresh trial, I feel more and more astonished at my own declensions, which make the stroke necessary; and at the patience of God, which will continue to undertake, by mercies and judgments, the preparation, of so unmeet a subject, for heaven. It is easy to *talk* about the vanity and folly of earthly attachments and dependencies. But the Christian must be brought to an habitual, *practical* determination to have no other god but Jehovah. He must be brought to say, in the deepest sincerity of his soul,

> The dearest idol I have known,
> Whate'er that idol be,
> Help me to tear it from its throne!

And there is no doubt that most of the trials of the people of God, are sent for the accomplishment of this very end. It is no easy matter, with such earthly hearts, and surrounded by earthly objects, and cares, and duties, and pleasures, to preserve and advance in spiritual-mindedness. But, without this, we are not warranted to hope we are Christians, we cannot expect to be partakers of the heavenly inheritance.

As to the reports of sickness in Boston which you have heard, there can be no doubt that it has been very sickly there. The whole number of deaths, from various causes, the last week, was twenty-five. The fever has been checked, since the commencement of the present coldness of the weather. If it can be so, consistently with the wise purpose of Jehovah, I most earnestly desire this weather may continue. But I want a heart to feel such entire satisfaction with God's government as shall keep me in perfect peace. To view the subject so as to weep with those that weep, to long that the impenitent, who are sick, may not be driven away in their wickedness, and to desire, more intensely, that the judgment may be sanctified, than that it may be removed, is, no doubt, the manner in which it ought to be viewed.

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* Her oldest child. † Her third child. ‡ Her youngest child at that time.

I received a letter yesterday from my dear husband. He was, when he wrote, just about to leave Montreal for Quebec. He says he has been much gratified with his journey, and that his health is much improved. I hope he will not return before the middle of September, but I fear that, when he has turned his face homeward, he will hurry as fast as possible.

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Bridgewater, August 25, 1819.

I hope, my dear Mrs. ——, you, and all the good people of the Old South, have been pleased with the preaching you have had since Mr. Huntington left home. I think that yesterday, and the preceding Sabbath, you could not fail to be gratified. But after all, ordinances will be barren and unprofitable to us, however well administered, unless the God of ordinances meets with us in them. I believe I lose more, by neglecting a due preparation for religious duties than in any other way. God will be inquired of to do these things for us—to make attendance upon his ordinances, in a spiritual sense, delightful and profitable. The word must be sanctified by faith and prayer, and then it will be a word in season.

How are your niece and daughter? I hope they experience a growing determination to endeavor to secure the pearl of great price—the safety of the soul, whatever else may be lost. The day is fast approaching, when all will be felt to be a dream, a bubble, without the durable riches of the Christian. Nothing else which we may acquire, can be retained when we enter the eternal world. And may I not say, nothing else can ensure us happiness in the present world? for

> The spider's most attenuated thread
> Is cord, is cable, to man's slender hold
> On earthly bliss. It breaks at every breeze.

You have no doubt seen Professor Stuart's Letters to Mr. Channing. I am delighted with them. An enemy must, I think, trim his powers of perception to an uncommon degree of acuteness, to find in them any of that bigotry, and sourness, and uncharitableness, of which the orthodox are so liberally accused. Mr. S. has certainly written like a Christian and a gentleman, and better judges than I am, think he has written like an able critic and a profound scholar.

August 28. I am distressed at my want of faith. The yellow fever has been in Boston since I have been here. There were eleven deaths by this disease, on Friday and Saturday of last week. I hear that my dear husband will probably be at home on Monday, and that, from travelling rapidly, he is much fatigued. I fear he is sick. If he is not, he will be exposed to the fever, when he reaches home. Oh for faith to leave him with God! My very heart sinks in prospect of his falling a sacrifice to disease.

September 1. I have reason to think my beloved husband actually is sick. I have only heard that he is fatigued, and has stopped at Groton. I am going home in the stage to-day. Oh that I may find things better than I fear.

TO A FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Groton, September 9, 1819.

This has been a trying day. My dear husband is very low. How this distressing fever will terminate, God only knows. The prospect is very discouraging. Oh, that we may all be prepared for whatever is preparing for us. I feel as if I had never been afflicted till now. But the Judge of all the earth will do right. I want to feel that all is safe while he governs.

The apprehensions expressed in the above extract were soon realized. Mr. Huntington died, at Groton, between twelve and one o'clock, on Saturday, Sept. 11, 1819. "On the succeeding Monday, the mortal remains were interred in Boston, with appropriate exercises, and great solemnity. A sermon was delivered on the occasion, by the Rev. Mr. Dwight,* in the Old South Church; where an immense concourse was assembled, to express their interest in the solemn event, and to pay a public tribute to distinguished worth. The clergy of Boston and vicinity, the members of the church and congregation of which the deceased had been pastor, and a multitude of other acquaintances and friends, united with the bereaved family and relations in deploring their common loss, while they praised God for the bright example of Christian virtue which they had witnessed. The spacious house of worship where the last sad offices were performed, was so crowded, that many hundreds tried in vain to obtain admittance. The tokens of unaffected mourning were so numerous, and so impressive, that it could not be doubtful in what high and affecting estimation the character of the departed minister and friend, was held.†"

In relation to the state of Mrs. Huntington's mind, under this heavy trial, an intimate friend, who was constantly with her, during the first week after her husband's death, observes, in a letter to the compiler, written March 1, 1824, "There was, in her whole deportment, the most convincing and pleasing evidence of humble, child-like submission to the divine will. Most of her conversation with me at that time, worthy of being recorded as I felt it to be, I regret that I am compelled to say, has escaped my memory. I will, however, add a few particulars, in the unconnected manner in which they occur to my recollection.

"I remember asking her, on the day succeeding the death of Mr. Huntington, if it required an effort to be submissive. She answered, 'I am enabled to bless God, that I have not had to contend with an unbelieving thought. I would rather have endured the agony of separation, than that my dear husband should have borne it. I can truly say, "'Tis the survivor dies."'

"On another occasion she said to me, 'The bitterness of my grief can be known only to God and my own soul.

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* Pastor of the Park Street Church, in Boston.

† Memoir of the Rev. Joshua Huntington, published in the Panoplist for December 1819.

But I think I can say, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him,' and can lay hold on the hand that smites, for support. But, oh, the loneliness of widowhood! I am as Peter, sinking in deep waters.'

"The resignation and calmness she was enabled to feel, she ascribed 'to the mercy of God, in answer to the prayers of his dear people,' many of whom, she knew, constantly remembered her in their supplications."

But the most interesting and satisfactory details, in relation to this important period of her life, are found in her journal and letters, extracts from which will now be continued.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, OF N. L., THEN AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, September 22, 1819.

I received your kind letter, my dear sister, this forenoon. I am happy to say, that I have passed the time, since you left me, much more comfortably than I expected. God is very gracious to me. He gives me such a measure of sweet quietness, as composes and tranquillizes my spirits. "Blessed is the man who trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is: for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river; and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." Sometimes I have fears that the precious promises of God's word cannot belong to one so vile and rebellious. But I am generally able to flee to the blood of sprinkling—to trust in Him in whom all the promises of God are Yea and Amen, and to say, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Yes, my dear sister, on God's part, all is mercy, mercy. The world has changed with me. But the memory of the blessed saint is pleasant, though mournful to the soul. The prospect of heaven makes the dark shades of my picture brighter. I think I am not deceived.

Sept. 25. The desolating stroke my soul was dreading, when I last wrote in this journal, has fallen upon me; yes, it has fallen upon me, and I live. What shall I say?—The right hand of the Lord doeth valiantly, or I should now have dwelt in silence. Wonderful grace! He that hath loved me bore me through. His everlasting arm was under me. He taught and enabled me to say, Thy will be done. To him be glory. The being I loved better than myself, has left me in this wilderness. He on whom I leaned, has gone over Jordan. But another arm, mightier than his, sustains me. I can say, I humbly believe with truth, Nevertheless I am not alone, for God is with me. And I must again cry, Grace! grace! I am a wonder to myself. Oh! the infinite grace of God! A worm is in the furnace, and is not consumed! And must I not love this "strong Deliverer" better than all? Shall I not cheerfully give up my comforts at his command.

October 3. When I can, I intend writing some of the particulars of my blessed husband's departure, for future satisfaction, should I live. When I look at my loss only, I sink. What I lost in that holy man of God, that amiable companion, that faithful friend, that prudent counsellor, that devoted husband, God knows. What the Church has lost, in his eminent consecration of himself to his work, his love to the poor, his compassion to the afflicted, his meekness and humility, his zeal and disinterestedness, his fervent prayers, his lovely and almost spotless example, God knows. Oh, it is pleasant for memory to dwell on the recollection of what he was. 'Tis a beautiful picture, on which I must ever fasten the eye of my fond remembrance with satisfaction. But that light is removed; put out, I do not say. Oh no. He lives, to die no more. And I am permitted to hope I shall, ere long, go to him, and dwell with him forever in heaven! God is carrying on an infinitely perfect plan of government. The removal of my beloved husband, in the midst of his usefulness, is a part of that plan. Shall I not lay my hand on my mouth, and say, Thy will be done?

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, October 13, 1819.

My dear sister. My health continues comfortable. My spirits are better than could have been expected. Should I live, I think of spending next summer in the country, perhaps at A. Where God may then call me, I know not.

I wish to feel myself entirely at his disposal, to live one day at a time, and to believe that, when the period comes for determining in what place I shall pass the remnant of my days, my kind Parent will direct me. That place may be Boston; it may be in Connecticut; or it may be some where else. God knows, and with him I leave it. My expenses would be less in some other place than in Boston. But my children have other interests besides pecuniary ones; interests which the parent on earth and the Parent in heaven, view as most important. Where, upon the whole, I judge *these* interests will be best promoted, there I shall go.

The Old South Society have been very generous. They have voted to give me, the use of the parsonage-house, all my wood, and the salary for one year from the first of this month; and one thousand dollars a year, for six years, commencing Oct. 1, 1820. So, you see, comfortable provision is made for us for the next seven years. And more than this, for I shall be able, I trust, to save something each year against the future. At any rate, I must, if possible, live on the thousand dollars. That, I suppose, would be an ample support in N. L. But this is an after consideration. Present duty and present grace, it best becomes me to be looking for. And, my dear sister, my God is good. For the most part, I can cheerfully leave futurities with him, humbly hoping that he will enable me to glorify him, wherever I am, and however I am. This is the great point. And when I leave all, quietly, to Him who, with the gift of his Son, will most certainly give his children all things best for them, I am happy.

October 14. Thus far the Lord has led me on.

He has been better to me than my fears. I have great comfort in my children. God has very mercifully provided for my temporal wants. I have cause to mourn only my own sinfulness. Heaven does not look so near to me as it did. I have come back, in some measure, to earth. The wound bleeds; and will, while life lasts, continue to bleed; but the first anguish is exchanged for suffering, as real, but less intense. The restless agony of my sleeping moments, has yielded to a watchfulness less disturbed; and the tears and groans of a heart alive to sorrow, while the senses are slumbering, have, in a great measure ceased. But I mourn. My precious husband is dearer than I ever knew him to be in life. Oh my Savior! make me diligent and faithful in thy service; and, when thou hast done with me here, let me live with him in thy presence forever!

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Boston, October 26, 1819.

In relation to my troubles, I wrote to you in ——, and gave you particulars; but it seems you did not receive my letter. I will only say at present, that I have suffered beyond expression, and, on the other hand, God's wonderful grace has stayed my soul with the strong aid of his promises; so that as my sufferings have abounded, my consolations also have abounded by Christ Jesus. At present my chief desire is to glorify God, and my chief cause of sorrow, that I glorify him so little. Sin is my bitter, persevering, specious, malignant enemy, the foe which I most dread, the greatest disturber of my peace. When, at any season, my soul is taken near to my Savior, and satisfied from his fulness, this treacherous and cruel foe steps in, and beguiling me from my refuge and my resting-place, leads me far from his presence which is life, and from the manifestations of his love which are better than life. Oh! when shall these wanderings be healed; when shall I love and serve Him, whom I do believe my soul loveth, as I ought; when shall I be satisfied with his likeness; when shall sin be bruised under my feet?

Dear Mrs. ——, God loves you. Are you afraid to trust *all* with this wise, and kind, and loving, and unchangeable Friend and Father? Believe that he will manage your concerns better than you could do yourself. Believe that as your days, so shall your strength be. Trust implicitly to your covenant God. We have no reason to fear any thing but sin. And even over this foe, if we are Christians, we shall be made conquerors at last. Blessed hope! It is worth laboring for, worth suffering for.

October 31. It is a grief and trouble to me that, after having experienced such a trial, so calculated to detach me from this world, I find I have an earthly heart still. I want now to live, feeling as Abraham did, when he went out, not knowing whither he went; to be seeking *daily* grace and *daily* bread, taking no anxious thought for the morrow; saying,

> I am not concern'd to know
> What to-morrow's fate will do;
> 'Tis enough for me to say,
> God supplies my wants *to-day*.

But, instead of this, I find myself saying, "Where shall I fix my place of future residence? How shall I ever do my duty to all these children? How shall I manage, to make my little property turn to the most advantageous account? &c. &c." Oh, my Father! I know that after all these things, do the Gentiles seek, with carefulness; and that it is not well, it is sinful, for me to be seeking them thus.

I have been lamenting before God, to-day, my great guilt in this respect, and feel somewhat relieved. I have been giving myself again entirely to him, desiring to trust in him with a simple dependance; to stand ready to go where he shall appoint, to do, and to be, just what he pleases; to find my future pleasure in doing, with a holy courage and humility, and energy, the work which he shall give me to do. How pleasant will even my widowed life be, if I can live thus! No matter where we are, or what we are, so long as we can find our happiness in glorifying God, and in doing and suffering his will. Oh, blessed, happy life! This was the happiness of the Apostles and primitive Christians, who suffered the loss of all things temporal, were persecuted, afflicted, tormented, and slain; and yet sang the song of victory, through Jesus Christ their Lord, on the rack and in the flames. This is the very essence of heavenly felicity. With a capacity to enjoy this happiness, we might well say, with the Psalmist, "Though the earth be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea, we will not fear." Oh my God! I am fully satisfied that here is the only quiet resting-place. Help me, oh, help me, thus to stay myself only on thee! Then shall I be happy.

November 5. Nearly two months have elapsed since the hand of the Lord removed from me my earthly prop and comfort; and I can say, in the language of Mrs. Grant on a similar occasion, "Mine is a growing sorrow. Like other streams, it widens as it proceeds." It may seem strange, but I have felt a mournful pleasure that, if we must be separated, if these heart-rending agonies must be endured by one of us, I am the sufferer, and he is happy. It is sweet to me to know, and reflect, that God loved him better than I did. We both, I trust, loved our God supremely, and shall love him forever. Oh the blessed truths of Christianity! These bear up my spirit amidst the waves and billows of affliction. I am afflicted, but not in despair; cast down, but not destroyed; sorrowful, yet sometimes rejoicing. Dear, blessed saint! we shall meet, I trust, where adieus and farewells are sounds unknown.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N.

Boston, November 7, 1819.

So far as human sympathy can operate to heal a heart torn by a wound like mine, it has availed for me. Few ever had more affecting and soothing proofs of tender concern and affectionate commiseration, than myself. I number this among the many mercy-drops which my kind Father has mingled in my cup of sorrow. Few had so much to lose. But this would make my ingratitude the deeper, were I to murmur at the removal of a mercy which I never deserved, especially when its removal has been accompanied with so many, so very many, mitigating circumstances. No; though God witnesses the tears of agony which daily force themselves from eyes long accustomed to weeping, I trust he does not behold them tears of impatient repining, or impious rebellion. I think I can say, He hath done all things well. I think I feel, that he has a right to govern, and can comfort myself with the sure and certain conviction, that his plan of government will be most conducive to his own glory and to the happiness of his people. In this trying dispensation the question has arisen, Which shall govern, God or myself? And blessed be his name! I am not conscious that, for one moment, I have felt disposed to take the reins of dominion into my own hands. "God knows best." This silences, and, prevailingly, satisfies, my troubled soul.

How does the world dwindle, when heaven comes near! And how cheerfully can difficulties be surmounted, and trials endured, and duties performed, and sacrifices made, while we look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen! The great difficulty is, to keep a steady eye of faith on futurity, and the great example of the Author and Finisher of our faith in view; to remember that we were created "to glorify God and enjoy him forever;" and that, therefore, the main object of our creation, and of course the main ground of our happiness, cannot be affected, materially, by the temporal changes through which we pass, while this object is pursued. Oh, this is the difficulty! Faith wavers. We want to find our happiness in earthly comforts; and when they are removed, we feel as if all was gone. Dear brother and sister, pray for me. Pray that I may have double grace, as I have now double duty to perform. Pray for the children of him whom you loved. Let us pray for each other, that God will bless us in all things, and bring us at last to the inheritance of the saints in light.

November 9.

> No more shall this bosom, when heaving with anguish,
> In the kind breast of sympathy seek for relief,
> While helpless I wander, or hopeless I languish;
> Ah, cold is the heart that would share all my grief!

Consuming thought! Who shall ever more wipe the tear of sorrow from these weeping eyes, or lend the ear of undissembled sympathy to the complainings of this broken heart? Who shall bend, with the smile of tenderness, over my bed of suffering, and cheer me with the voice of affection? Alas, alas, No change can ever restore him to these widowed arms! And I should go down to the grave in sorrow, were it not that God is my helper.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, November 14, 1819.

Your long and confidential letter gave me great pleasure. There is a sympathy in the feeling of persons who have been recently afflicted, which cannot be expected to be found in others; a mutual chord which, touched, vibrates with a kindred sound. We have not suffered exactly alike;

but we have suffered; and that circumstance has made us love each other better than we did before.

But, my dear friend, in our recent trials, neither of us has been called to suffer as those who have no hope. And how does the reflection, that our departed friends have now reached the point which we must reach before we can be happy, sweeten and soothe the anguish of the separation! Let us contemplate them in every supposable view, and the prospect is full of consolation. We cannot think of them as what they were, or what they are, without pleasure. They are the highly favored of the Lord, who, having finished all they had to do in this vale of tears, are admitted to the higher services of the upper temple. True, when we look at our loss, nature will feel. This is allowable, is becoming. When I view myself, riven asunder, root and branch, not the limbs torn away, but the very body of the tree sundered from top to bottom, nature must feel the parting agonies, must, at times, be ready to sink under the consciousness of her dissolution. All this must be, to those who have interests to be smitten, friendships to be broken, and hearts to feel.

Yes, dear E., our hearts have bled. The wound inflicted has been deep. We have felt that the stroke was full of anguish, that it went to our very souls. We will not deny that this is all true. We will not please ourselves with the delusion that the deep, deep wound, which the hand of God has inflicted, can ever cease to bleed. But, oh my friend, is there not balm in Gilead, is there not a physician there? Is not that Physician our Savior; wise to discern, prudent to manage, strong to save? Has not the kind hand, which smote so deeply, accompanied the stroke with many softening, mitigating circumstances? Oh, yes; I trust we both feel that it is so. It is God who hath afflicted us, the infinitely wise, compassionate, and faithful Jehovah, the Lord our God. And does it not argue great want of confidence in Him, if we sink into despondency when he chastises us? Does it not shew, either that we think we could manage things better than he can, or that there is something which we have not cordially submitted to his disposal?

And now, O God, thou art the potter, and we the clay. O how this quells the murmurings of self-will; how it settles the restlessness of the troubled spirit; how it plucks the sting from the rod of affliction! *God knows best.* Precious truth! It is an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast, which keeps it from shipwreck, amidst all the storms and tempests of the troubled sea of life. Oh for a firm, unwavering faith! This is all that is wanting. With this we may say,

Cheerful, I tread the desert through.

With this we may rejoice when our beloved friends are taken from the stormy ocean to the peaceful port, from the weary wilderness to the happy home, from the field of conflict to the crown of victory; and trace, with holy courage, our way, through the same difficulties, to the same glorious recompense of reward. But ah! this—a firm unwavering faith, is too often wanting. We miss our temporal comforts; the heart which sympathized in all our pleasures and pains has ceased to beat, the ear which was always open to listen to our complaints and our wishes is closed, the kind voice of affection and disinterested love is hushed, the arm which supported us is withdrawn:—it is a chilling thought. Cherished alone, we feel its freezing, benumbing influence fastening upon all the springs of comfort and hope, and turning every stream of joy into one waste of cold and motionless despair.

But, my dear friend, we must not view our trials thus. We must think much and often, of the blessedness of those whose removal we lament, of the perfection of the divine government, of the certainty of the promise that all things shall work together for good to them that love God, of the rapid approach of that hour which will unite us eternally to those in Christ whom we love, of the danger of creature comforts, and of the suffering life on earth of our glorious High Priest and Head, and his assurance that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. Oh, my dear E., if we are Christians, there is a glorious prospect before us—as much of the good things of this life as an infinitely wise and kind Father sees to be best for us, and hereafter an eternity of unmingled and ineffable bliss.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. Y.

Boston, November 21, 1819.

Sometimes I feel, very sweetly, that God is my Father; can look back, and see how I have been borne on his kind arms from my birth, distinguished by many special mercies, led in a right way; and trust him for the future;—and I am happy. But it is not always so. At times faith wavers, and I feel as if I were sinking in the deep waters, where there is no standing.

My dear sister, there is no resting-place short of heaven. There is no certain dependance upon any temporal comfort, which does not take its rise from a heart thoroughly satisfied to have God govern as he pleases. He is leading the Christian, through a dark and dangerous wilderness, to a city of habitation, the New-Jerusalem, the land flowing with milk and honey. And he is wise to know what is best for the poor wayward pilgrim whom he is guiding to glory, and faithful to do it. We are not always able to see how it is, that his dispensations towards us are either wise or faithful. It becomes us, however, whether we can see it or not, to believe that it is so; and to labor after the spirit of him, who said, in his extremity, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Baxter says to the Christian in affliction, "If you are comforted now, you must not expect comfort always, for God sees that you need hours of very different exercises." I experience a great variety of feeling. To-day, sorrow has prevailed. I have thought of the long, long separation I have been called to from the husband of my bosom, and shuddered to look forward. An awful chasm presents itself to my view, and my spirit is overwhelmed within me. But the precious truths of the Christian religion then come in for my support. I look to the "Man of sorrows." I view him passing a life of suffering unmitigated by the sympathies of human relations and friends, a stranger to the comforts a merciful God has left me, having not where to lay his head, persecuted, denied, crucified, working out the salvation of an unthankful world, through difficulties, and dangers, and death, and remember that, as a man, he was undefiled and separate from sinners, and that he was the

Son of God;—and I chide my ungrateful heart for being unwilling to suffer any thing for him. Oh, my sister, if God will bring us to heaven at last, it should not surprise us if we, like our exalted Head, must be made perfect through sufferings.

I send you a subscription paper for the Sermons, which it is intended soon to publish, of the blessed man whom we all loved. May their publication brighten his crown of glory!

November 27. Another calamity! Some person found access, yesterday, to my bureau; stole some of my best wearing apparel, and, what is worse, from a drawer usually locked, but for two hours at that time, unlocked, a box, containing Mr. Huntington's miniature, the chain, a breastpin with his hair in it, a pair of ear-rings which he purchased for me in Montreal on his last journey, and some articles found in his pocket after his death; including all the little presents in jewelry he ever gave me, except a *broken* ring by accident in another place. This only is left. Sad emblem of our broken union. It seems like sacrilege to plunder me of these mementos of my departed husband.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. Y.

Boston, December 30, 1819.

It is just four weeks to-night since the birth of my little boy. I have not yet been able to use the pen much, on account of my eyes, though I have been remarkably comfortable. I dined down stairs yesterday week. My spirits are, for the most part, quiet. You will tell me, I should now think and speak of my mercies rather than my trials. Oh yes; I know it, and God has indeed been very gracious to me. I have no reason to complain of him, or of any of his dealings. Nor should I be anxious about the future. My business is, to fill up the present, with humble performance of, and patient submission to, the will of Him whose government is righteous, who does all things well, and all whose purposes have for their object the everlasting welfare of them that love him. Oh for large portions of that blessed hope which is an anchor to the soul;—a hope that will keep all who possess it from being shipwrecked on the troubled waters of affliction, though they may be tossed and driven from billow to billow, and, at times, feel as if they must give up all for lost. I would not, I do not, complain, though my breach is wide like the sea. God is good; and I am, comparatively, happy. I believe heaven is my home. That prospect brightens this dark valley.

Mrs. Mason* is probably within a few days of her long expected, long desired rest. The removal of her beloved shepherd, though she acquiesced, and, on his account, rejoiced in the dispensation, was like a blow at the root. The effects of the stroke evinced its heaviness. And the dear woman will not remain long behind him she loved so sincerely. Oh! what a meeting!

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Boston, January 12, 1820.

—— Now I will turn to a more pleasant subject, and tell you how delightful the time looks, when I shall go to him who loved me, and who has left so many sad, sad remembrances behind him; and, above all, when I shall go to Him who, I trust, loved me unto death. Oh, my dear H., it is sweet to rest in the Lord.

> Time, what an empty vapor 'tis!

But no matter. The shorter it is, perhaps the better, if our work is done.

How precious is a throne of grace! How many cordials has our kind Father provided to strengthen and sustain us, till our feet shall be planted on Mount Zion above, to wander no more forever! Oh, H., I trust we shall have a glorious meeting there. "God is known in her palaces for a refuge." How beautiful is the idea! How little is known on this blessed subject by the world! And should not this consideration urge us constantly to pray for them? Alas! my conscience condemns me here. How little I feel for the poor sufferers who have no knowledge of this refuge, who catch at every straw for support, who buoy themselves up, for a little time, with the vain hopes of this world, and, with the Rock of ages full in view, sink forever!

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* An aged member of the church of which Mr. Huntington was Pastor, greatly respected and loved for her humble, devoted, and consistent piety.

January 14. How good is God to one of the most unworthy of his creatures. When I feel, as I do sometimes, entirely sundered from earthly hope and happiness, I go to my God, and I find his arm strong, his grace sufficient, his presence precious, his promises sure; I am happy in his will, and I look forward to be happy in his love and presence forever. Then I have sweet communion with a present God. He is near me; I feel that he is. The example of my once suffering Savior supports me. But oh! when he withdraws, all is dark! I have no hope but his mercy. That bears me up. I have not followed a cunningly devised fable.

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, January 14, 1820.

You ask, how I bore my inexpressible loss. To my own astonishment, I bore it, not only without sinking, without murmuring, but with calmness, with a quiet satisfaction in the will of God, and an humble hope of strength, support, and all needful grace here, and heaven hereafter. The unspeakable consolations of that bitter hour, I cannot tell you; nor how a merciful God has, a great part of the time since, appeared for one of the most unworthy, stood by me in my difficulties, strengthened me with his strength, supported me with his presence, and manifested to me his fatherly love. I speak this to the glory of his grace. Heaven knows that in the whole number composing the family of Christ, there can few be found less able, in their own strength, to bear such a calamity than myself. I loved the blessed saint, perhaps idolatrously. My feelings are naturally uncontrollable. My bodily health was delicate. None had more to lose. And all was, at a time of peculiar sensibility, swept away. On the one hand, my heart was breaking with the intenseness of its separating agonies. On the other, God was sustaining with the strong cordials of the Gospel. So that, as my sufferings abounded, my consolations also abounded, by Jesus Christ.

And now, what shall we say to these things? Truly, my friend, religion is a reality, a precious reality. Christianity holds out, not only principles the most pure and practical, which, when properly received, have the best influence on the character of man in every relation he sustains, but consolations so sublime in their nature, so efficacious in their application, as can leave no doubt, in the minds of those who experience them, of its truth. In prosperity we may believe as though we believed not; but when we find ourselves sheltered in the cleft of the rock, while the storm is raging without; when we feel the anchor of our hope holding us firm and strong, while the waves of sorrow are tossing us hither and thither, and we are every moment threatened with shipwreck; surely we can doubt no longer.

January 21. No person, I believe, ever had more or kinder friends than I have. And none, I am sure, ever needed them more. It is a special mercy of a faithful, covenant-keeping God. But the kind sympathies and good offices of comparative strangers, is what I could not have expected. O how much mercy have I to speak of! Rouse up, slothful soul! Press all thy powers, with renewed resolution, into the service of "thy Love, thy Life, thy All." I have peace, sweet peace of mind, and communion with the God of my salvation. My seasons of prayer are generally precious moments, in which I draw near to God. He is my helper. His word is most sweet; I feed upon it, and am strengthened. He is faithful. To him be glory, glory, forever and ever. Let me take stronger and stronger hold of the Rock of ages! especially let me grow in humility! Oh, the unsearchable goodness of God!

Evening. Well do I know what Montgomery meant by "the changing spirit's rise and fall." Mine have fallen to-day. Oh how lonely I feel!

> How widow'd every thought of every joy!
> His last sigh
> Dissolv'd the charm. The disenchanted earth
> Lost all her lustre. Where her glitt'ring towers?
> Her golden mountains, where? All darken'd down
> To naked waste, a dreary vale of tears.

Perhaps this depression has resulted from my disappointment about the publication of a volume of my husband's sermons, on which I had been depending, I fear too much. I cannot persuade myself that it is best to give it up. But the blessed man was always opposed to posthumous publications, as generally wronging the author; and his brother, who has been looking over the sermons he left, thinks that they are in such a state, (many abbreviations and short-hand characters, whose meaning was known only to the writer, and many sentences and paragraphs left incomplete to be filled up extemporaneously at the time of delivery,) that he could not do them justice. It is hard to give it up. But hush, hush, unquiet soul! Thy friend is with God; and to him shalt thou go, if thou art faithful. He needs no such remembrancer with his Savior, or with thee.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. Y.

Boston, January 23, 1820.

Next Sabbath I expect to carry my little Joshua to the sanctuary, and devote him to that God whose gift he is. May the offering be accepted! May the first lispings of his infant tongue, be the expressions of holy and grateful affections to his Maker and Redeemer! I expect our dear brother D. to administer the ordinance, and Deacon P. has kindly offered to stand up with me, and present the child. I sometimes fear it will be more than I can bear. But I feel it to be a duty to have him baptized in public; and his dear father always objected to private baptisms, except on extraordinary occasions. The great thing, however, is to do it sincerely and in faith. The Lord give me grace thus to do it!

I want time to tell you how good God has been to me. My stolen goods have all been graciously restored to me. My mind was, for the most part during my confinement, kept quiet, notwithstanding the painful retrospections which would press themselves upon my attention whenever my head touched the pillow, where, on like occasions, I had been so often soothed by a voice which will speak to me no more, where every object reminded me of my unspeakable loss, where I seemed surrounded by the shades of the departed. Oh, my sister, you can have no idea of it. When S. was born, dear Mary Lyon, my mother, and my husband, were with me; now they were all taken. But I found the arm of the Lord strong to sustain. May my life be ever devoted to his praise. Trust in him my dear F.; let your confidence in him grow stronger and stronger; trust him forever.

TO MRS. T., OF D.*

Boston, January 25, 1820.

My dear friend and sister. Ever since that sorrowful event which numbered me among those who can, more emphatically than any other classes of mourners, say, Lover and friend hast thou put far from me, and mine acquaintance into darkness, I have felt desirous of writing to you. Not because I expected to offer any consolation to your mind, with which it is not already much better acquainted than mine, but from that natural feeling of sympathy, which is excited towards those whose trials are similar to our own. And now that I have taken up my pen, the reflection that my time might be better occupied than in obtruding myself upon you, and thus opening anew the fountains of your grief (if indeed they have ever been closed in any measure,) by the recital of my own sufferings, almost induces me to lay it down again. However, I do not mean to pain you, and agonize myself, in this way. Profitable as it may be for common mourners, to dwell often and long upon the circumstances of their bereavements, in order to cherish the impressions which such dispensations may have made on their hearts, it is not profitable for us. Such sorrow as ours is in no danger of being suddenly diverted. The danger is on the other side, of its pressing so constantly and heavily on the spirit, as to crush the feeble body to the grave. And would it not have been so with us, my dear friend, were it not that the hand of the Lord has been upon us for good?

I have wished, and still wish, to know how you do, what are your circumstances, and how your mind has been exercised under its heavy afflictions. I, you know, have had accumulated ones. But have we not both found that precious promise verified, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be?" Has the Lord ever been "a wilderness" to us? And may we not safely trust him for the future? Does he not know exactly, what measures of sorrow we can bear, as well as what kind we need?

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* The widow of a clergyman; who, in the prime of life, and of usefulness, had been removed by death, leaving five small children.

And now, my friend, what remains for us to do in this world? Not to live for the temporal enjoyments of life, certainly; for how can any comfort be received, any delight enjoyed, which will not, as long as we live, be embittered by the recollection of those, dearer to us than our own lives, who once sympathized in all our joys, and whose sympathy with us was a principal source of our satisfaction? Yes, this bitter, bitter thought, will press itself upon our remembrance, when we lie down, and when we rise up, in the house, and by the way. And, viewing our loss only in this manner, the world looks like a waste, a desert, a weary, monotonous desert, stripped of all that once enlivened it. But we must not view it so. What did Christ live for? What did Paul live for? Alas! if we could find our happiness here in that in which the Savior found his, we might yet see many good days in the land of the living. And this is what we must labor after. If we have little left us to enjoy, have we nothing left us to do? And the happiness of our souls ought to result, the happiness of a holy soul will result, from doing and being just what God pleases. The mind which feels that it has no sympathies to be exercised, no object upon which to repose its affections, no business to employ its faculties, must sink into a state of hopeless and dreadful despondency. But the Christian should never feel thus. Though our precious husbands have left us, have we nothing to feel or do for their children; nothing to do for Christ, and for the Church which he hath purchased with his own blood? And may we not yet be happy in doing diligently the work which he has given us to do? My dear friend, we shall never be happy *just as* we have been. Oh, no, never. The smile of tenderness will wait for us no more when returning to our sorrowful habitations. The voice of unmingled love will greet us no more in our afflictions. The counsellors, advisers, supporters, and prophets, upon whom we leaned, who sanctioned by their influence the expressions of maternal authority, who bore us constantly and earnestly before God, are gone! Nature shudders, as she casts her eye forward, and thinks of this long, long, long separation.

But why have I suffered myself to fall into this sorrowful strain? I did it unintentionally, unconsciously. Forgive me. I have pained you; and I have pained myself. I was going to say, we must find our happiness in a different way—in girding up the loins of our minds to a more diligent performance of duty, in putting on, as good soldiers of the cross, the whole armor of God, in setting our faces as a flint against every thing which can discourage, intimidate, or wound us, in remembering the example of our devoted, our suffering Savior, in leaning on his arm, confiding in his wisdom, and trusting in his grace and strength, and in sending forward our hearts to that happy, happy home, which we hope one day to reach, and whither our beloved friends have gone before us. Let our expectations of earthly rest be moderate, except of that sweet rest which results from simple trust in God.

I have written thus far, and have not yet mentioned what I had most in view when I began. I think we may derive benefit from remembering each other's children in our prayers. Can we not devote ten minutes, every Saturday evening, at nine o'clock, to special prayer, for each other, that we may have grace, wisdom, courage and patience to do our duty; and for our children, that their affections may be sanctified, our instructions blessed, they brought into the covenant early, &c. Will you write, and let me know what you think of it? My little boy wakes, and I must bid you adieu,

TO MRS. H. OF NORTH BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, February 12, 1820.

Very dear brother and sister.* Remember that the government of God extends to the minutest concerns of his creatures. Remember that he loves his children so well, that he wills every thing that is best for them, and that he possesses infinite power to execute all the purposes of his will. What then is the result? That if he removes your children, he does it because it is necessary for you, because his glory and your good can be more effectually promoted by such a dispensation, than they possibly could in any other way. Do you not believe it? Verily, if you cannot see it now, you shall see it hereafter. "Take" therefore, my brother and sister, "the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy." Of his Church it is said, "*In measure* when it shooteth forth, he will debate with it: he stayeth the rough wind in the day of his east wind. By this, therefore, shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged; and this is all the fruit, to take away sin." If you are rebuked, it is in the measure only, which a righteous God and merciful Father sees adequate to answer the end which he proposes in thus chastising you, viz. to take away sin. Are you not willing, if God pleases, to be made like your Savior? Is it not sufficient for the disciple to be as his Master? Are you not willing to fill up the measure of his sufferings? Look to the "Man of sorrows." Derive from his example, patience under your lighter trials, and from his experience of human calamity in his own person, a firm belief, that in all your afflictions, he is afflicted, and will extend to you the support which he sees you need. Carry all your burdens to him. Wait upon him continually; and though weeping may endure for a night, joy shall come in the morning.

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* Two of Mr. and Mrs. H.'s children were, at this time, dangerously sick.

For myself, I do not feel as if God intends removing both of these children. I have constantly believed, that one of them at least will be spared. I feel much for you. If I had not been almost sick, I should have gone out with Mr. P. Since he was here, I have scarcely left the room. I have been afflicted with a violent cold. If the children continue sick, and I can be of any use, you may depend on my coming, extraordinaries excepted. May God be with, and bless, and sustain you.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, February 15, 1820.

Dear M., Why is the hand of the Lord thus upon you? Why are you and dear brother called to pass thus under the rod of the Almighty? I trust neither of you is impatient under a chastisement administered by One, whose wisdom and whose goodness you cannot call in question. Though the stripes of the great Father of the whole family of believers, are often laid most frequently and most heavily on those who, we should think, need them least; yet we do not know what important purposes are to be effected by such a course of divine proceeding. Let us look about us. Do we not find that those Christians who appear to be left almost to themselves, who pass along the path of life with few changes and trials, usually make but small advances toward a state of spiritual manhood? And, if our blessed God sees that the disciple, like his Master, must be made perfect through sufferings, ought we not to welcome every means which will conduce to this blessed end? Can we desire to be babes in Christ all our days? If it is a proof of sonship to be chastised, may it not prove a special favor to be greatly chastised? Putting myself entirely out of the question, (and I feel that I ought to go with my face in the dust all the days of my life, that I have profited no more by my trials,) I do believe, judging from the observation I have been able to make, that those persons, who have become what we call eminent for piety, have generally been made so, under God, by sufferings. This seems reasonable; for how will, how can, depraved, idolatrous human nature, ever rise heavenward, when it can be satisfied with earthly objects? "Every branch that beareth not fruit, the Father taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

If we were asked, what is the greatest good; should we not answer, conformity to God? If we were asked, what are the best circumstances for the Christian to be placed in; should we not answer, Those which will, most constantly, and most effectually, promote his conformity to God? Shall we then pray for afflictions. By no means.

We are weak, and are crushed before the moth. We should not pray for what we do not know that we could bear. We should habitually pray for conformity to God; and quietly leave it with him, to determine by what means he will effect this blessed end.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, February 19, 1820.

My dear sister. I am truly grieved for your affliction. How little did I think, when, with an aching heart, full of distressing apprehensions, alas! soon and certainly realized, I left Bridgewater in September, that I had taken a last farewell of one of the dear little ones. But so it probably was; and so little we know of what a righteous God is preparing for us.

As to the child, I trust it is, and shall be, well with her; that she will be safely lodged in the bosom of the great Shepherd, who loveth the sheep, and gave his life a ransom for them, and who hath said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

As to yourselves, dear brother and sister, it is in vain to *talk* about the duty and reasonableness of submission. But you must *do* as the Psalmist did under different troubles: you must give yourselves unto prayer. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will hear." This is a land of deserts and pits, of temptations, and sins, and troubles. If God sees fit to take our little ones, and lay them up in heaven till we go also, shall we complain of him?

February 25. I went to Bridgewater on the 22d. Brother D. has lost his oldest child.* It was a melancholy visit. The first day, all the fountains of my grief seemed broken up, so that I was ready to be overwhelmed. O how I watched, five months before, at that window!

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* She died on the 21st, aged six years and eight months; leaving to her afflicted parents a satisfactory hope of her piety, and having furnished striking evidence of the ability of very young children to understand the most important evangelical truths, when properly presented to their minds, and a most pleasing encouragement to parental fidelity in the religious instruction of children. See Memoir of Mary Hallam Huntington.

And how often since, has the recollection of that hill, down which I was never, never more to behold my husband coming to meet her whom he loved, almost made me spring distracted from my pillow. But my soul grew calm, and I could say, "Am I not safe beneath thy shade?" Heaven is filling fast. The prospect of an admission there is ineffably glorious.

March 6. Six months have now elapsed since my affliction; and it is as fresh as it was at first. Will it always be so? The very thought of remembering him less, seems like unfaithfulness to one whom I had the best reasons for loving. God has been inexpressibly good to me. In his mercy he has given me a son, the very image of his father, to bear his name, and, in some measure, fill up the awful chasm, which the removal of that best of fathers and husbands has made in my family and in my heart. I believe I am looking heaven-ward. I desire that this stroke may ever drive me to God as my husband and my portion. The past looks like a dream. On God's part, all has been faithfulness, and mercy, and love; on mine, how much unfaithfulness, and treachery and sin! Oh, why do I find it so hard to keep near the Fountain of blessedness, the Spring of all my comforts? Shall these wanderings one day cease? Shall I ever, Oh my God, be made perfect in thy likeness? It seems too much for me to hope for. And yet I must not, cannot be satisfied short of it. Then my soul, watch, and pray; labor, and faint not! If thou patiently follow those who are now inheriting the promises, thou shalt also, in due time, enter into the same everlasting rest.

TO MRS. L., OF N. H.

Boston, March 15, 1820.

My dear Aunt. The expressions of affection and interest from those who are kindred according to the flesh, are very welcome to a being, who, like myself, has, at twenty-nine, almost outlived all she once claimed as near relatives in this land of the shadow of death. When I look abroad into the world, how many places are vacated, which were once occupied by those I loved? But I am not alone. A merciful God has left me many friends; perhaps as many as I need. And what is more than all, I trust through grace, that he has given me himself. There are moments, however, moments of incommunicable sorrow, when a heart, smitten as mine has been, feels that all beneath the sun is "darkened down to naked waste:" when to look back, overwhelms it with recollections too interesting to be resisted, too agonizing to be endured, and to look forward—alas! may you never behold the chasm I have trembled to look into!

But why do I speak thus? God knows best. And the soul satisfied with the wisdom and rectitude of his government, may endure even this, and sing of victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dear Mrs. L., THE GOSPEL IS TRUE: we shall be saved if we live by the faith of the Son of God. Our only danger lies in forsaking the Rock of our salvation. All the storms of this troubled sea, can do us no harm, if we cast the anchor of our hope, firm and strong, into the Rock of ages.

Oh for a strong, a lasting faith!

It would transform this dreary desert into a region of light and joy.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, March 17, 1820.

My health has, generally, been very good of late, though the weight of my cares sometimes lies heavily upon me. I should have thought once, I could not have sustained all the care I have in one way and another, without sinking. But through the great goodness of God, my mind is usually kept tranquil; and I feel as if I could thank him for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come. My dear little boy grows charmingly. He is a lovely child; and I find his smiles and interesting actions often soothe a sorrow which must ever be deep. When I go down into the parlor, and see nothing but the likeness;* when I think of the future, the husband who will never return; when the chilling recollection of this long, this bitter separation pours all the agony of hopeless sorrow over my soul:—I return; there is another Joshua, whom I press to my aching heart, and I thank God, my heavenly Father, that he gave him. These are bitter hours, when nature prevails. But it is not always so. No, my sister, if it were, I could not have lived.

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* A portrait of Mr. Huntington.

Mr. Winchell* is gone. He followed the "dear brother" of whom he spoke so often in his delirium, about a fortnight ago, to the place of the faithful minister's glorious and eternal reward. Mrs. Mason also, precious saint, is gone. She now understands perfectly the "need be" of her pastor's removal; an event which she spoke of at first as "a cloud without one ray of light," an event which she felt to be a heavier stroke than any she had ever before experienced. So one after another of the Church of the First-born, whose names are written in heaven, are gathering into their rest. Happy, happy, they who have passed safely through this valley of tears, endured the hardships of the way, been brought off conquerors over all, and received the recompense of reward!

March 21. When I am taking those walks, now solitary, which I used to take for the gratification of my beloved husband—walks which must always be associated with his image and his love in my mind, and which I now take from a sense of duty, to preserve a life which is important, at least to his children—and cast my eyes over this busy metropolis, this beautiful world; I feel that I am a stranger. What a change has the removal of him whose memory I love to cherish, occasioned in the face of the whole world! But are not all strangers? Oh for grace to feel that, while I am at home in the body, I am absent from the Lord; for grace to shake off these chilling, withering, useless regrets! Oh Thou whom my soul longeth to love with all my strength, have pity upon me! I do not murmur. I would kiss the hand that smites, though the rod is felt to my inmost soul. Pity and love, and sanctify me! and all is well.

April 13. Were I to sit down and brood over the various circumstances of my late sorrowful bereavement, it would unfit me for every active duty. My mind would dwell upon its own personal calamities, till my health would be undermined, and all the faculties I possess prostrated. When my thoughts do fasten on that point—his sick-bed, it produces emotions so powerful, as almost to overwhelm me. I love him better than ever. The reflection that he never will return—O how bitter!—But, my blessed Savior, shall I sit down in despair? If I have but little left to enjoy, is there nothing left me to do? And may I not be happy in doing thy will? Is not that the best happiness? Oh my best, my unchanging Friend! lessen this attachment to the husband of my affection, so far as it interferes with my love to thee.

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* The Rev. James M. Winchell, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Boston, a clergyman of excellent character and great promise, about the age, and an intimate friend, of Mr. Huntington.

21. I have heard that Mrs. Winchell* is deranged. I felt, when I prayed for her, as if she would be supported. When I realize by what a slender hold I retain that reason which can alone make me useful, that reason of which, if of any thing, I have been proud, it humbles me in the dust. It is of God's infinite mercy, that my late afflictions have not made a wreck of my mind. I have deserved it. But will not He who has helped, continue to help, me? He who has carried me through the greater, will he not carry me through the less? Shall I distrust him now? Shall I not commit the whole disposal of myself to him? This I know—if I am sustained, it will not be by dint of my own natural resolution or fortitude. No, no. To God will be all the praise.

23. There was a very sudden death, by typhus fever, last week—a young man, one of our church, a member of Cambridge College, and a frequent visitor here. What a world is this? When this youth came to condole with me, after the departure of his minister, how little I thought he would follow him so soon! Yet man, with an obstinacy which, in any other case, would be deemed absolute insanity, continues to fasten his affections and his hopes on this changeful world, and to forget that its next revolution may whirl him into that state of existence which must endure forever, a state irreversible as well as eternal!—Oh for the soul-sustaining consolations of past days! I am a sinner, the chief of sinners. I used to think, once, that this was extravagant language for me to adopt; now, I feel it to describe the common estimate which I make of myself. Oh for sanctifying grace; that, when the summons arrives which shall remand me to dust, I may not be afraid with

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* The widow of the clergyman whose decease is mentioned page 213.

any amazement, feeling that for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

23. I have long intended, for the sake of my children, to describe some of the exercises of my mind at the time of my blessed husband's sickness and death; but have not before felt able to do so.

The last part of my stay at Bridgewater, I experienced, at times, a peculiar flagging of my animal spirits, and a sense of horror which can never be described. There was no particular cause for this that I am aware of. On Saturday, August 28, 1819, I heard that Mr. Huntington had stopped at Groton, fatigued; and was not much alarmed, supposing that he did not come into Boston so late in the week, to avoid the labor of preaching immediately after so long and fatiguing a journey; and overruled by the solicitations of my friends, and the consideration of the yellow fever being in Boston, I remained at Bridgewater until Wednesday. On Tuesday I sat watching at my window, to see the well known chaise, the sound of which, on similar occasions, had always delighted me. Toward evening I expected the stage, and possibly, my husband in it. The stage appeared. Instead of my husband, the driver threw me out a letter. It struck a pang to my heart. When I had opened it, through the mistaken kindness of my friends, I was still informed that "he was fatigued." Distracted with apprehension and suspense, I waited for morning; and, at nine o'clock, left Bridgewater in the stage, with a heart tortured with apprehensions, alas! soon and certainly realized. During my ride home, this passage of scripture was upon my mind, and comforted me: "All things work together for good to them that love God." I was feeble, but wished to go to Groton that night. Mr. —— assured me, however, that Mr. Huntington was not very sick. He had seen him on Monday. Miss —— was with me. Mr. ——'s assurance of my precious husband's being only slightly feverish, had, in a great measure, lulled my fears.

On Thursday morning I set out, in a chaise, accompanied by a friend, for Groton. During the ride, the first answer of the Assembly's Catechism was strongly impressed upon my mind, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." I felt that, for the last twelve years, I had, in a great degree, misunderstood the great object for which I was made; that, if not my chief, a very high end with me had been, to be happy in my husband, and make him happy in me. I felt that the highest happiness of a rational mind ought to arise, from answering the purpose for which God made it; and therefore that I ought to be happy in glorifying God, not in enjoying myself.

We reached the public house in Groton. I inquired if they knew how Mr. Huntington of Boston was. The answer was, "Very sick indeed; the doctor has been there all day; he is a very sick man." My limbs would scarcely support me to the house. Upon our arrival there, we went into the parlor alone. The first object that met my eye, was the hat of the blessed sufferer above stairs. It struck me with fearfulness and trembling, as the herald of death. I asked for the physician; and in reply to my agonized interrogation, "Is there no hope?" he said, "Mr. Huntington is very sick. I should have some hope, were it not that all fevers this summer have been unusually fatal."—The overwhelming agonies of that moment can never be described. The language of my heart was, 'Oh that God would redeem his life with mine!' The doctor told me I must compose myself, as to see me agitated might destroy the object of my solicitude.

Mr. Huntington was apprised, by the physician, of my arrival. There was an increase of ten to the number of his pulse upon this intelligence. When I entered the room in which he lay, he was gasping for breath; but his countenance glowed with an expression of tenderness I shall never forget, as he threw open his arms, exclaiming, "My dear wife!" and clasped me, for some moments, to his bosom. I said with perfect composure, "My blessed husband, I have come at last." He replied, "Yes, and it is in infinite mercy to me." I told him, all I regretted was, that I could not get to him sooner. He said, with a tender consideration for my health, which he always valued more than his own, "I am glad you could not; in your present circumstances, it might have been too much for you."

From that time, owing to the insidious nature of his disease, I had considerable hope. I had seen him. I was with him. He was as sensible of my love, and of my attentions, as ever; and I could not realize the stroke that was impending. Never shall I remember, without gratitude, the goodness of God in giving me that last week of sweet, though sorrowful, intercourse with my beloved husband.

The days and nights of solicitude drew near a fatal close. I could not think of his death. At that prospect, nature revolted. I felt as if it would be comparatively easy to die for him. But the day before his death, when all spoke encouragement, I felt that we must part. In the bitterness of my soul, I went into the garret. It was the only place I could have without interruption. Never shall I forget that hour. Whether in the body or out, I could scarcely tell. I DREW NEAR TO GOD. Such a view of the reality and nearness of eternal things, I had never had. It seemed as if I was somewhere with God. I cast my eye back on this life; it seemed a speck. I felt that God was my God, and my husband's God; that this was enough; that it was a mere point of difference whether he should go to heaven first, or I, seeing we should both go so soon. My mind was filled with satisfaction with the government of God. "Be ye followers of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." seemed to be the exhortation given me upon coming back to this world. I do not mean that there were any bodily or sensible appearances. But I seemed carried away in spirit. I pleaded for myself and children, travelling through this distant country. It seemed as if I gave them, myself, and husband, up, entirely. And it was made sure to me, that God would do what was best for us.

From that time, though nature would have her struggles, I felt that God had an infinite right to do what he pleased with his own; that he loved my husband better than I did; that if He saw him ripe for his rest, I had no objections to make. All the night he was exercised with expiring sufferings, and God was pouring into my soul one truth and promise of the Gospel after another. I felt it sweet for him to govern. There was a solemn tranquillity filled the chamber of death. It was an hour of extremity to one whom Jesus loved. I felt that He was there, that angels were there, that every agony was sweetened and mitigated by ONE, in whose sight the death of his saints is precious. I felt as if I had gone with the departing spirit to the very utmost boundary of this land of mortals, and as if it would be easier for me to drop the body which confined my soul in its approach toward heaven, than retrace all the way I had gone. When the intelligence was brought me that the conflict was over, it was good news; I kissed the clay, as pleasantly as I ever did when it was animated by the now departed spirit. I was glad he had got safely home, and that all the steps of his departure were so gently ordered.

It would be in vain for me to attempt a description of my feelings the next morning. I had never seen such a sun rise before. It beheld me alone. Were I the only created being in the universe, I could not perhaps have felt very differently. I went into the chamber in which he died. There, on the pillow, was the print of his head. The bed of death was just as when it resigned, forever, the body of him who was all the world to me. His portmanteau, comb, brush, &c. lay in sight. God wonderfully supported me.

But why do I dwell on a description which, even now, is almost too much for me? How did God sustain a creature who was weakness itself? How mercifully he has carried me through all my successive trials! Truly it was the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in my eyes.

And now; O, how is it now? Not so much comfort; laboring with sin; afraid almost to live in this wicked world; dreading a thousand evils in my present lonely state. But all this is wrong. God hath said, "Who shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? How kindly my beloved husband used to remind me of this text.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, May 1, 1820.

I thank you for wishing one like me to come among you. I feel that there are many dear friends in A. But I have concluded to remain in Boston this summer. Unless I had made up my mind to fix upon A. as a permanent place of residence, it would not be worth while for me to remove there this spring, as I might thereby subject myself to the inconveniences and expense of two removals. With my large family, I should not like to board. My friends here advised me to purchase a small house, at an expense of $2,000, or 2,500; and settle down in Boston. Dear Dr.

Worcester* thought I should be more eligibly situated here, both for comfort and usefulness, than any where else, and could, on the whole, live at as cheap a rate. I hope and trust the Lord will direct me. I desire to submit myself entirely to his guidance.

May 6. Great, great is my charge. My children, thus far, are a comfort to me. But we live in a wicked world. I must unite tenderness with resolution, patience with authority, meekness with decision. I must be obeyed; and I must be loved. How earnestly ought I to pray, that my children may never have occasion to "despise my youth," or my sex. Oh that I may be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus!

11. I have sweet peace of mind. I feel that, in Christ the living Head, all the redeemed of the Lord meet as in one common body, both the saints on earth, and the saints in Heaven. ONE FAMILY! Blessed Savior, is it indeed so? And am I one of thine, and, as such, one of that happy number who are redeemed by thy blood, and made kings and priests unto God? Wonderful grace! Gird up thyself, oh my soul! Labor now to do something for Him who hath loved thee unto death.

12. God is in all respects better to me than my fears. I expected the return of spring would fill me with sorrow. Instead, however, of its being accompanied with gloomy associations, the appearance of nature putting on her new array, sweetly reminds me of that better resurrection, which all the redeemed of the Lord shall one day experience. It speaks of the better life, into which the Christian shall be ushered, when he quits the prison of his clay. It brings heaven to my mind. If I were to speak of the difference between my feelings now and formerly, I should say, that the view I take of divine things now, gives them more certainty; there is more of a practical efficacy in it, a something real and tangible, which I did not use to feel as distinctly as I do now.

15. "He that endureth unto the end shall be saved." We are in an enemy's country. It will not do to yield, or

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* The Rev. Samuel Worcester, D. D. late Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

to cease fighting. "Behold" said Christ to his disciples, "I send you forth as sheep among wolves." This is true, not only of ministers, but also of private Christians. But my greatest foes are within myself. These traitors give the enemy an advantage. But, oh to say, in faith,

No fearing or doubting,
With Christ on my side;
I hope to die shouting,
The Lord will provide.

TO MRS. H.* OF N. B.

Boston, May 25, 1820.

My dear madam. May one, who can have no particular claim upon your notice, and who can offer no excuse for thus intruding upon you, except the deep interest which she feels in your present affliction, address you thus familiarly? Since the first moment that I saw in a public print, the announcement of that sorrowful event, which I, alas! well know, has made your heart bleed, I have desired to write to you; have desired and hesitated, not knowing whether it were best, or not, to do so.

There are moments when we feel the impotence of our sympathy, and yet are not able to withhold the expression of it. It is a relief to ourselves, if it brings little or no consolation to the object upon which it is exercised. Shall I tell you then, my afflicted sister, that my heart aches with you, and for you? Shall I say, that I well understand all the agonies which you suffer? Yes, for there is, I know by experience there is, a spot in the human heart which, under its heaviest calamities, is conscious of experiencing some mitigation of its sorrow, from the certainty that it does not mourn alone. And you do not mourn alone. Many have felt the stroke which, in its heaviest effects, fell on you. And many who do not weep for you, are lamenting a similar trial inflicted on themselves. God seems to have come out of his place, and to have numbered many of the wives and children of his prophets, widows, and fatherless. Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men.

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* The widow of a clergyman, who, immediately after returning home from a journey, in which he had visited Boston, and seen Mrs. Huntington, was, in the prime of life and of usefulness, arrested by death; leaving two small children. With his widow, Mrs. Huntington had no personal acquaintance.

And now, under the first overwhelming pressure of your present sorrows, I feel a strong desire to comfort you by the comfort wherewith I myself have been comforted of God. I want to tell you that the precious promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee," is sure and stedfast. With respect to the removal of our dear husbands, there is one consideration which lies at the foundation of all our other motives for resignation, viz. THE LORD HATH DONE IT. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." He will not call one of them home, till his work below is finished. So long as the blessed God is possessed of infinite wisdom to understand perfectly what is best for his children, of infinite mercy to will all that he sees to be best for them, and of infinite power to execute all the purposes of his will, shall we not choose to have him do what he pleases? If we were unwilling that he should take our beloved friends when he thinks proper, the question at issue would be—Which shall govern, the all-perfect Jehovah or ourselves? In this view of the subject, (and it is unquestionably a correct view of it,) who would not say, Let the will of the Lord be done? Oh, we may be assured that the reasons which have led him to afflict us so deeply, are satisfactory to himself, and will be so to us, if we are so happy as to reach heaven at last. And can we dare to wish to change what God sees to be necessary for us? Can we dare to wish our beloved husbands to stay here, when like their Master they have finished their work on earth, and God has immediate employment for them in heaven?

And, my friend, what consolation does the Gospel hold out to us respecting those whose removal we lament; that we may not sorrow as those who have no hope? Where is our love for them, if we would wish to retain them in this dark, and distant, and sinful world, when God sees them ripe for their rest? We suffer, indeed; but we suffer alone. Those, whose trials we used to feel as painfully as our own, are far beyond the influence of the vicissitudes of this troubled state. They are happy. Let us rejoice for them. And as for ourselves, we have the promise of an unchangeable God, that, As our days, so shall our strength be; that (if we are his children, I mean) all things shall, or as your dear husband said to me in one of his visits of condolence when in Boston, "all things *do* work together for our good;" that we shall be brought off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that loved us; that our tribulation shall work patience, and our patience experience, and our experience hope; and that, in due time, if we follow those who, through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises, we also shall be made partakers of their blessedness.

We must labor, my dear friend, "to forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before." This passage has been a great support to me. In our circumstances, we are prone to enfeeble our capacities for present exertion, by useless regrets, and distressing retrospections, and unbelieving anticipations. But all this is wrong. To us it belongs to suffer patiently, bear cheerfully, and perform faithfully the will of God, now. He will provide for to-morrow. Let us also look to our Savior, and learn that the disciple must expect to be as his Lord, and the servant as his Master.

Among the passages of scripture which your dear departed husband mentioned to me when here, two have comforted me much. One was, "Be thou strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus," not in yourself. The other was, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry." He also read me a sermon of his, (for I was not well enough when he was here to attend church,) from the text, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." It will be a comfort to you, I think. Oh, if he could speak to you now, he would bid you rejoice for him, and be afraid of nothing but sin. His visits, when he was in Boston, were very pleasant to me. He felt for my sorrows; and now I feel for yours. But if God loves us, he feels more for us than any human friend. And if he smite us, it is because he sees we need it.

I cannot ask you to write, and tell me some of the particulars of the sorrowful event, because I do not know as you will be able. But if you could without too great an effort, it would be a great satisfaction to me. I think we, widows of clergymen, should form a community by ourselves; and never bend the knee without remembering, before the Father of mercies, our sorrowful situation, and the children whom God has given us. We need each other's prayers.

Adieu, my dear afflicted friend. May He who hath broken, bind up; He who hath wounded, heal. He can, I trust he will! To him I commend you.

TO MRS. T. OF D.

Boston, June 6, 1820.

Yes, we can say, "It is good for us that we have been afflicted," while we look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; and no longer. Viewed merely in a temporal light, our sorrows are a cloud without sunshine, the thickness of darkness. Do you always feel as if you can say, "I bless him for all that is past, and can trust him for all that is to come?" Or do you sometimes feel like Peter, when he followed his Master over the tumultuous waters, and found his faith failing, and his feet sinking? The latter describes my experience; though I have reason to thank God, that the prevailing frame of my heart has been cheerful satisfaction with the divine government.

If there is any lesson which I have been learning, of late, more completely, more painfully, I should say, than others, it is my own sinfulness and weakness. I have felt more deeply than ever before, that, if I get to heaven, it will be grace that brought me there. There may be those who can bear constant sunshine. But it is not so with me. However, my dear friend, God knows what we both need, and what we can bear. Whether we walk by the light of the pillar of fire, or under the shadow of the pillar of a cloud, still we are guided and preserved by a faithful and unchanging God. O how like a cordial to the sin-sick soul is the reflection, that its salvation is of grace; not obtained by its own imperfect, sinful services.

We must not wonder my dear friend, to perceive imperfections and follies in our children who are not sanctified, when we see so much amiss in ourselves. We should lay hold, with steady, practical, and persevering resolution, of their faults; and not be discouraged, if the remains of evil which we had supposed completely subdued, spring up again, seemingly, as powerful as ever! He that laboreth *perseveringly*, shall come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. Pray, when you pray, for me, that, if any of my children are soon to be removed from this world, both they and I may be prepared for such an event. We should feel such a stroke now deeply.

June 9. I spent the last week at A. I was, in respect to spiritual things, very dull while there, and several days after my return; but am now in a better frame. I had serious doubts, while at A., of my personal religion. But my mind was very gloomy about every thing. Oh, can it be possible that I know nothing of communion with God? The occasion of my doubts was, a sense of my great sinfulness. It seemed as if there could be no grace in such a heart. But I think I do determine to cleave unto the Lord; to choose to suffer affliction, if need be, with his people, rather than have my portion here. And when I feel my hope of acceptance with God the strongest, I feel the most unquenchable desires to serve him with my heart, my whole heart. When my hope of his soul-comforting favor wavers, I droop. If his love is lost, all is lost; heaven and earth are whelmed in one dark and chilling cloud of hopeless sorrow.

22. I have been looking over an old journal kept previously to my marriage. O how like a dream my past life looks! Where are the days that have gone by? Fled, with the friends of my childhood, forever.

> The clouds and sun-beams, on my eye,
> That then, their shade and glory threw,
> Have left, on yonder silent sky,
> No vestage where they flew.

Surely we do "pass our days like a tale that is told."

But in every thing I behold my husband, my dear husband. All that I ever loved or feared, all that excited pleasure, or produced disgust, speaks of the friend whose image is associated with all. Yes, this heart, faithful to its trust, can never, never cease to remember thee, friend of my bosom; once mine, now removed, from her who loved thee much, to Him who loved thee better! A chasm is left, which he filled; a chasm not to be described; a chasm I have trembled to look at. But I remember that others suffer also. And shall this selfish heart bleed for its own sorrows alone? No, no. When I am pouring forth the prayers of my soul for others, when I strive to lessen the anguish which rends the bosom of others, in affliction, my own sorrow is lessened also. I feel that I am but one member of the general body, that by diffusing my sympathies and my sorrows to all the members, their intenseness is softened, their effects chastised and elevated, and that what, felt for myself alone, would have led me to an absolute resignation of my soul to the influence of despair, when diffused, diverts my mind from itself, and drives me to a throne of grace in behalf of others, more constantly and earnestly than before.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

June 28, 1820.

I have just been thinking, my dear E., what inconsistent creatures we are. When Mrs. T. was here, I could not write to you, because I was not in good spirits. To-day I am not in good spirits, and take up my pen to endeavor, by writing, to divert and divide my thoughts. Sometimes, I find, when I strive to rouse my mind, rendered inert by an exclusive contemplation of its own calamities, to some degree of interest in the joys and sorrows of others, I am richly repaid for the effort by a partial alleviation or suspension of personal suffering. And who, my dear friend, does not suffer? I chide my selfish heart for brooding, with withering anguish, over its own afflictions, as if there was no other being in the universe to pity.

Have you ever read Flavel's Token for Mourners? I hope, however, this letter will find you in less need of such helpers than you have been. I do not mean that the work is not good. It is a favorite book of mine. But I hope you are now able to rejoice that the will of the Lord is done. I think you and I, dear E., are both, from our constitutional intenseness of feeling, in danger of yielding ourselves up to the dominion of sorrow. My beloved friend; is it well for us to "cast a longing, lingering look behind" very often, when we are conscious, that every such look tears open afresh a wound, which may bleed to the last hour of life? I acknowledge that I dare not trust myself with a frequent view of the past. The poor, frail spirit, cramped and clogged and enfeebled by the tenement of clay it inhabits, faints at the retrospect of friendships sundered, never to be renewed on earth, of enjoyments which

I shall experience no more forever. As long as we live in this world, we have something to do in it. Our great wisdom and our happiness lie, in endeavoring to be pleased with all that God does for us, and in striving on our part to do something for him. It is a hard lesson to learn; but let us remember that, if we labor after such a state of mind, God has promised that he will, one day, bruise sin and Satan under our feet.

July 2. I think I did desire to say something profitable to my children to-day, and to have some token that it was so. I scarcely ever had more freedom in prayer for them and with them, that God would be pleased to speak by me to their hearts. And they appeared solemn, and affected. Oh that the word may be like good seed lodged in good ground; though buried, preparing to produce a rich harvest. I find it a great assistance to me in prayer for my children, to remember that God has been our God for many generations back.

4. A day on which the world are rejoicing. And a day on which I rejoice too; but for a different reason. So far as these violent and turbulent expressions of gladness affect me, it is with sadness. But I am rejoicing in that freedom with which Christ makes his people free. I rejoice that all the redeemed of the Lord are fast gathering into the kingdom of their Savior. I rejoice that my husband is there I rejoice in the hope of this blessedness for myself. I rejoice in the manifestations of my Savior's love while travelling through this valley of tears. I envy not the worldling his joys. My heart longs that such may be made the subjects of the redeeming grace of God forever.

12. How great a benefactor should I esteem that man, who could tell me how to resist sin effectually, in its *first* operations. When the specious temptation is *first* held out to the soul, then is the time to say, 'Get thee behind me Satan.' But, oh! shame and confusion belong unto me! Why do I harbor these traitors, these enemies, within me! Dear Savior, thou hast told me what to do. Thou hast promised me strength. Why then am I so often betrayed into the snare which a subtle foe lays for my feet? Why is my resistance to sin so feeble?

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, July 13, 1820.

We ought to cultivate a cheerful view of all the providences of God, both as they respect ourselves, and others. There is always, in this world, a right side to every thing, but sin. There are always alleviating circumstances attending the most afflictive dispensations. It is a great attainment in Christian wisdom, to be able to discover these lucid spots in the cloudy atmosphere which envelopes us, in the present state, to give God the praise for them, and take to ourselves, and impart to others, the comfort of them. Our dear departed friend, Mrs. Mason, was, I think, a remarkable example of cheerful piety. I scarcely ever heard her speak of any dispensation of providence, in which she could not discover much of mercy. And if we all possessed more of her faith, the ills of this life would be *light* afflictions, and work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, July 20, 1820.

The winter passed comfortably. I can complain of nothing but myself. All the paths of the Lord have been mercy and faithfulness unto me. And now, my dear sister, I might tell you, that my unfaithfulness to the best of fathers, the kindest of friends, have been equalled only by His mercy and patience and loving kindness. But to tell you of these things would do no good. I will say, however, that the longer I live, the more deeply I am made to feel, by bitter experience, that sin will cleave to me till I die; that every moment which bears me fresh mercies from God, swells, proportionably, the mighty number of my sins, because it adds to the number and weight of those obligations which are upon me, of entire devotedness to my God, not one of which can ever be cancelled. Yet I feel that it will be sweet to be eternally indebted to Jehovah; that it will be sweet to sing the praises of that grace, whose height and depth and length and breadth we shall never be able to measure.

July 24. I have been thinking how unwise it is, to suffer our happiness to be the sport of every selfish, or capricious, or unfeeling mind. And this is always the case, when we attach undue weight to human opinions. The heart that is rendered miserable because an acquaintance does not, to-day, meet it with all the cordiality of yesterday, is to be pitied. For, in this world, where selfishness and whim govern the many, and where ill health, anxiety, affliction and other causes, are so apt to affect the external appearance of the few, such occasions of disquietude must frequently occur. It is wise, then, to feel, as far as possible, that our dependance for happiness is supremely on God, who changeth not; to seek his approbation as our first object; to be thankful for earthly friends; to strive to deserve them; and to labor after that equable frame of affection towards all men, which shall not be entirely governed by self-love, or the degree of affection with which ours is reciprocated. This is the love of a noble mind, the love of a Christian.

29. We are apt to become selfish under the endurance of affliction, and to act as if we supposed every one must feel the same interest in our trials that we do ourselves. But the disinterestedness which is able to consign the memory of a beloved friend to oblivion, by the voluntary confinement of recollections connected with that friend to one's own bosom, is of a high order. There are moments, when a generous mind cannot but feel the insignificance of human praise or blame. It is for a few months or years, and where is it? Blessed is the man whose "record is on high;" whose name is recorded, not merely in the changeful remembrances of cotemporaries, but in the Lamb's book of life; who can receive this testimony, that he pleases God.

August 1. I do not feel quite well; and when my health is feeble, my animal spirits always decline. I feel weak, and exposed to every assault, from within, and from without. The guide of my youth is gone. My earthly prop is broken. He, who was ever at my side to counsel me with all the meekness of wisdom, who, in my seasons of spiritual darkdess, was ever near, and ready to lend me the unobtrusive, but steady and unwavering light of his own faith and his own lovely example, will smile upon me no more. That light is removed. Oh, why did I improve it so little while it continued to shine upon me? And yet, I do find comfort in committing the keeping of my soul unto God, as unto a fathful Creator, and most righteous Judge. Though I am naturally of a fearful heart, he has helped me wonderfully. And will he forsake me now?

22. "Where is Mrs. Huntington?" Often do I hear this interrogation; but not in the pleasant tones of a faithful, tender, and confiding husband, as I used to do. It is sometimes the careless question of indifference, sometimes the peevish question of perplexity or ill humor; but never, no never now, the soothing inquiry of the friend, the sound of whose footsteps was always so sweet to my ear, the friend whose every interest, every pursuit, every affection, were so intimately connected with mine, as to make us always rejoice to meet each other, even after an absence of only a few hours. If there ever was a year when we were in a sense more entirely devoted to each other, when our attachment was more ardent, our happiness in each other greater, than at any other period since our marriage, it was the last year of our connexion. What it was to have all these ties sundered at one stroke, those may know who loved as I did.

30. I know several whom I think better Christians than myself, who are frequently disturbed with doubts of their good estate. Since my dear husband's death, I have had, comparatively, few doubts. Is this because I am proud and self-righteous, or ignorant of myself? I do trust my hope is grounded on the fulness of Christ, and the freeness of his grace, and not on any thing else. I do trust I have something of a filial spirit toward my blessed God, something of a voluntary renunciation of my own will, some sweet satisfaction with the divine government, some complacency in Jehovah's character, some sincere desires to do his will, resist the sin he hates, and be conformed to his image. I think I have fed on his precious word, and do take it as my heritage forever. Oh, if I know nothing of all this, what have been my supports, my enjoyments, my hopes, my fears, my daily consciousness all the year past? Ought I, oh my Savior, to doubt the reality of what thou hast done for me?

September 4. How infinitely good is God, still to continue his consolations to one who forfeits them every step of her progress! I think I felt last night, some brokenness of heart in view of the sins of the day; and that I longed for cleansing, as well as for forgiving, grace. Salvation would be no salvation, to me, if it were not salvation from sin. And this morning, I have sweet peace within. Oh the riches of God's grace! And shall I ever go on in this way; making such returns for the Savior's goodness? On his part, mercy upon mercy; on mine, declension upon declension, sin upon sin! Every day, every moment, the polluting torrent flowing; debasing, degrading all that I do, and say, and think! And will not death be welcome, if it gives me the victory? I thought so last night.

9. Last night was a sorrowful one. I did not expect to sleep. All the scenes of the year before, like distracting visions were before me. To-day, I feel extremely feeble.—I read this morning in course, the first chapter of the epistle of James. It seemed exactly adapted to my case. The bible is a wonderful book. I think I can say with the Psalmist, "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in my affliction." This book has done more for me than all the men on earth, and all the angels in heaven, could have done. Though even the Bible is only an instrument. It is to us just what God makes it. To him be the praise.

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER; GIVEN HER ON HER BIRTH-DAY. SEPTEMBER 10, 1820.

My dear child. You know that after man's apostacy from God, it pleased the merciful Jehovah to declare to him his gracious purpose of saving some of our race from merited destruction, through the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. You also know that, agreeably to this gracious declaration, God has always had a seed to serve him; or, in other words, that, since the world was made, there has always been a class of persons called the Church, who have professed themselves to be the people of God, in distinction from the rest of the world. God has also been pleased to say that he will not only be the God of believers, but of their seed after them. It has, accordingly, been the custom, in all ages, for believing parents to dedicate their infant offspring to God, before the advent of the Savior by circumcision, and since that event by baptism. It has been your privilege to be born of parents professedly belonging to this blessed family of believers.

You have been baptized. I will endeavor to explain to you the nature of this ordinance. In baptism you were *given to God, to be his child.* All your powers and faculties were consecrated to his service. Your parents, by that act, professed their determination to bring you up as a Christian; that they renounced this world as your portion, and took God for your portion; that they desired for you a moral nature, that would love the service of your God here, and the enjoyment of the holy happiness of heaven hereafter, above all other things; and that they would endeavor to keep you from following the course of this wicked world, which is in a state of rebellion against the God whom they wished you to serve. They vowed unto the Lord that they would bring you up for him, and would strive to prevent your acquiring any habits, conforming to any fashion, and forming any friendships, whose probable tendency would be to prevent your becoming the disciple of Jesus Christ. This is what your parents have done for you. But in order to your being interested in God's precious covenant, you must cordially, willingly, and joyfully, make all this your own act. You must agree to what your parents have done. You must choose the Lord for yourself. Blessed children who make such a choice! Wretched children, who trample on all these obligations, and make their way, through all these vows and engagements, to the gulph of despair! Oh, my dear child, will you not go, with your parents, to heaven?

I have written for you a short, simple covenant; which you may sign, *if you are determined to serve God.* But remember, it is better not to vow, than to vow and not perform.

COVENANT.

Oh most gracious Jehovah! Thou hast commanded us to love and serve thee. Thou hast provided a way whereby we may be saved. Jesus Christ has died for sinners. And through him, thou canst infuse into our carnal hearts a principle of holy love, which shall constrain us to serve thee with a willing and filial spirit. I am a sinner; by nature an alien from thee, exposed to thy wrath, dead in trespasses and sins. But I now desire, through Jesus Christ, and on account of his atonement, whereby even sinners may hope for mercy, to give myself wholly to thee. I give myself to God the Father, as my rightful Sovereign, my merciful Father, and my constant Benefactor; to God the Son, as my Prophet, Priest, and King, my only Savior and Redeemer; and to God the Holy Ghost, as my Sanctifier, Guide, and Comforter: humbly praying for grace to devote myself entirely and eternally to thee; that I may esteem it my highest happiness to consecrate to thee all I am and have, my health, my time, my influence, my possessions, to yield my will to thine, and rejoice to be guided and governed by it in all things. I take thy word for the rule of my life, and for my comfort in death. I renounce this world as my best good, and take thee as my portion forever.

O Lord, let this covenant, now made in meekness and fearfulness, and trembling, on earth, be ratified in heaven. And give me thy grace to cleave to it to the end of my life, for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

TO A FRIEND AT N. H.

Boston, September 24, 1820.

My dear E. I was glad to hear, from yourself, of your comfortable health and pleasant prospects. The death of your mother, occurring in the time and way in which it did, must have been peculiarly trying. But it must be a great relief to you, to believe that she is now safely lodged in the bosom of the great Shepherd, admitted to the rest she longed for, freed eternally from that cumbrous prison, the body, in which the soul has been struggling, though vainly, to glorify a Being whom, alienated and distorted as it was, it ardently loved.* Happy spirit! I give thee joy. Surely it was far better for thee to be absent from the body, that thou mightest be present with the Lord.—This event is attended with many mitigating circumstances, and I trust you are already able to see much mercy in it.

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* The lady referred to was partially deranged several of the last years of her life, but retained her interest in religion.

I rejoice in the birth of your dear boy, and hope he will be a great blessing to you and to the world. But beware, my dear friend, of making him your idol. Possibly you might have done this with your first babe. If you did, and God loves you, as I trust he does, you can easily see the "need be" there was for its removal. Alas! that so many stripes should be necessary. But I feel it to be so with me. "Afflictions," says good Mr. Baxter, "are like a hedge of thorns on each side of the strait and narrow way." And how prone are we to get out at every gap in the hedge which we can find? I have thought much of Moses' choice, "choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." And after a deliberate consideration of the subject, I trust this is my settled choice too. There is more comfort in suffering as the Christian does when God is with him, than can be found by the most prosperous worldling, in his most darling and successful schemes of temporal felicity.

September 30.

> Thought, busy thought, too busy for my peace,
> Through the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
> Led softly by the stillness of the night,
> Led like a murderer, (and such it proves,)
> Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;
> In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,
> And finds all desert now.

It is sometimes so with me. Then life seems a burden; and I almost long to have the cord sundered, which connects me with a world which has lost all that once rendered it delightful. These are not my best moments. When I feel most tired of this world, I feel least fitted for heaven. Any place is happy where God's gracious presence is enjoyed. Any soul may be happy which is resting on him, doing his will, and tasting the blessedness of his love. It is the sweetest frame of mind, to be satisfied with all that God does now, and satisfied to have him do what he pleases hereafter. Have I not known this happiness? And was it not a foretaste of heaven?

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Boston, October 5, 1820.

I too feel, as Mrs. Grant says, "weary worn with care." But I have been thinking how our dear Savior passed through this world. Little of quietude, no intermission from intense exertion, and none from that kind of suffering which results from constantly witnessing, and deeply feeling, the sins and sorrows of others. And shall we, who profess to be followers of this self-denying Jesus, expect absolute exemption from the trials he endured so constantly? Let us look unto Jesus; and learn patience under our *little* crosses. Oh, my dear friend, is the time coming, when we shall exchange this stormy sea, for the peaceful haven; this weary wilderness, for the heavenly Canaan? If so, let us not fear. Though we pass through the deep waters, God will be with us. Though our hearts are ready to faint at the roughness of the way, he has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Let us cling to our Savior. That

anchor hope shall firm abide,
And ev'ry boisterous storm outride.

TO MRS. T., OF D.

Boston, October 10, 1820.

Yes, my dear H.; I know all the weight of these high responsibilities. Sometimes, especially when my health is poor, I feel like sinking. The chief difficulty is in myself. I so often find myself impatient, or in some way or other, departing from the practice of my own principles, that my very heart fails me. And then I am apt to look forward, and weigh myself down with burdens which do not belong to the present, but which are created by an imagination full of dreary anticipations. We are not promised grace now against next year. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." It is good for us to live one day at a time, to bear the burdens, endure the trials, and enjoy the comforts of every day, not as if they were to last forever, but as the daily discipline by which a kind and faithful God is carrying us onward through this valley of tears, to bring us at last to our home, our Father's house, in which are mansions prepared for us by our blessed Savior, if indeed we are his.

The longer I live, the more I am made to feel that one thing only is necessary to make me happy, even here; and that is, a heart stedfast in God's covenant. While we keep close to our Savior, all is well. We rejoice that it is his air we breathe, his light we see, his love that blesses us with all that we enjoy, and his wisdom and faithfulness that inflicts all that we suffer; every little perplexity is referred to his will; every cross is borne meekly, because it is his allotment.—Gradually we depart from this unfailing friend. Where now is our peace? What has so mightily increased the weight of our burdens, and crosses, and trials, and duties? Why do our spirits tire, and our feet move heavily? Alas! we have left our Helper. We have been proud, and thought we could get along in our way alone. Or we have been earthly-minded, and have treacherously left our best friend for some wordly object of complacency. Or we have been slothful and negligent, and our want of faithfulness to our God has compelled him to depart from us. Oh wretched, oh foolish that we are, to depart so often from Him whose favor is life, and his loving-kindness better than life!

But, my dear friend, is it not a delightful thought that God will undertake for us, and with us? Surely none but a God of infinite patience could bear so long with such rebellious children. Ought we not to be glad when all such earthly calculations are subverted, such earthly hopes blighted, as have kept us satisfied at a distance from Him? Only let us have a heart filled with love to God, and earth will be heaven.

With respect to our children, let us remember, God never calls his people to any duties, which he has not pledged his own faithfulness to give them strength to perform, if they look to him for it in the way of his appointment. We may ask,

How can a feeble, helpless worm,
Fulfil a task so hard?

But does not God know our frame? Does he lay more upon us than we are able to bear? Has he not said, "My grace is sufficient for thee?" And is it not sufficient? My dear H., if he has left us to have the whole management and care of our little ones, he had good reasons for so doing. And now he knows all that we need. He sees us passing through the wilderness. We are a feeble company: but let us not fear; that is, let us fear nothing but ourselves. O how glorious is the grace of the gospel! Once or twice lately, I have felt much delight in reflecting, that in Christ is treasured up every needed supply for every exigency, every moment of our lives. It is unbelief, that heavy weight, that we must lay aside, if we would run with patience the race set before us.

Dear friend, another is added to our sorrowful sisterhood, Mrs. Larned, recently the wife of the young clergyman, who, you recollect, was settled, not long since, with such flattering prospects of usefulness, at New Orleans. What a world is this! How marvellous, that we cling to it still so closely! But shall not the day come to us, when this principle of indwelling sin, which invests the world with all its charms, shall be destroyed forever? Blessed hope, glorious hour!

October 12. There is a candidate here, preaching to our congregation. I am much pleased with him; but, notwithstanding this, my mind is greatly disquieted. It is not that I do not wish another Minister settled over this dear people as soon as may be, or that they should not love him. Oh no. What can be the meaning of these distressing emotions? I am a wonder to myself. When I do suffer, I suffer intensely.

14. This has been a week of severe discipline. At such seasons I am made to see by what a slender thread I hold my reason. It is necessary for me. All these lessons ought to make me better, especially humbler. And "as I sink, my joys shall rise." But when I am laid in the furnace, I fear being utterly consumed; forgetting the great Refiner who is able to preserve me, so that nothing shall be burnt up but the dross.

17. My mind is filled with peace. I desire to lose myself in my Savior, my interests in his, my will in his. I long for the prosperity of this dear, precious church, which has contained, which does contain, so many beloved ones.

Oh that, if this young minister is the one God has chosen for this people, he may be anointed with the Holy Ghost, and especially prepared for this place! I commend him to the Savior, who is able to make him just what he ought to be.

TO MRS. H. OF N. B.

Boston, October 20, 1820.

My very dear friend. It is some time since I received your affectionate letter; and it is not because you have been forgotten, that I have so long delayed to answer it. But I will not apologize. You know the claims of an orphan family, a bereaved and beloved people, and numerous correspondents, too well, for me to consider an apology to you necessary. Though I have not written, I have had some sweet moments in commending you and dear Mrs. T., and your little helpless babes, to our common Savior. I almost always, when I pray for our three sorrowful, but comforted families, feel as if I was bearing our common cause to ONE who has promised to be our Guide and our Guard "all our journey through." We are three feeble bands passing through the wilderness. Our dear earthly counsellors and guides are taken over Jordan before us. We are left alone. And yet we are not alone. Oh, no. Do we not sometimes lean on the arm of our present Savior? Do we not sometimes hear his voice whispering to us, "Fear not, I am with thee?" And though we wander from him, alas! too often, is he not near, to bring us back to the pleasant path which it is our sin and our sorrow to leave? Oh, my sister, is it indeed so? Is this God our God? And will he be our guide unto death!

I wish to know particulars respecting your situation. I think you have two children. I have six. One of them is a little helpless invalid; but I trust one of Christ's lambs. And it is probable she will be gathered into the fold, where her blessed father is, before many years. Some secret malady has laid its hand upon the feeble frame which imprisons the soul; and, by deranging all the organs of life, has compelled the weary spirit to sojourn, as a disordered and discomforted stranger, in the tabernacle which confines it. Two of my children are sons; one nearly nine years, the other ten months, old. The others are girls.

Have you seen "Babbington's Practical View of Christian Education?" I think highly of the work, and believe its circulation will be attended with important advantages to the rising generation. Its principles are so truly Christian, and its precepts so practically and circumstantially illustrated, that it is, in my estimation, extremely well calculated to be useful.

Let us, my dear sister, in all our discouragements, and under all our trials, imitate the example of holy David when in such circumstances. "But I," he says, "give myself unto prayer." Let us do so; and we shall find our strength increase, our prospects brighten, and all the clouds which have darkened our path, scatter, and make way for the shining of that Sun of righteousness, whose beams have turned and can still turn, our mourning into rejoicing. Adieu, my dear friend. Let us fear nothing but forsaking our Savior. Let us pray that each of us may keep close to Him, whose loving-kindness is better than life, to the end of our journey. May we meet in heaven!

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER, AT A.

Boston, October 29, 1820.

I went to-day, with Mr. W., to visit a sick young man. He could only whisper; and breathe with great difficulty. He said that he had never thought of God, as he ought to have done, when he was well; and that he had made no preparation for death. He is now much distressed, lest he shall die before his poor soul is interested in the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. He now wishes he had loved and served God when he was in health. My dear S., will you not pray for him, that he may have the Holy Spirit given him, that he may repent of sin, and love the Savior, and believe in him, before he goes into eternity? And oh, my dear child, pray often, pray earnestly, for yourself. I want to have you give your best days, "the dew of your youth," to God. I want to have you love and serve him from your earliest years. Adieu, my very dear girl. May the Lord bless and keep you, conduct you safely through all the dangers of this ensnaring world, and bring you at last to his kingdom.

The letter next to be inserted seems to require a word of explanation. The person mentioned, under date of October 12, as preaching to the congregation of which Mr. Huntington had been Pastor, had received from them an invitation to settle, and had left Boston to visit and consult with his friends. As it would be inconvenient for Mrs. Huntington to change her residence before spring, he had proposed to her, if he should return, to continue in the parsonage house until May, and receive him and his wife into her family as boarders. To this arrangement she had given her consent. These circumstances led her to write as follows.

TO MRS. W., AT G.

Boston, November 16, 1820.

My dear friend. It is with some peculiar emotions that I take up my pen to address you. Yet, though the circumstances under which I write might naturally occasion me some embarrassment, I do not feel as if I were addressing a stranger. I have thought of you so much since my last conversation with your husband, (whom I am happy now to consider as, in a certain sense, my minister,) that I view you in the light of a new found sister, whom I have not seen indeed, but for whom I feel that tender interest which will ripen into a sincere and permanent attachment when I know you better Allow me then to dismiss formalities at once, and hasten to the particular object of my letter.

When Mr. W. was here, he proposed to me, that, if he returned, himself and you should reside in my family this winter, instead of commencing housekeeping yourselves. I was a little apprehensive that this proposal originated, chiefly, in a desire to accommodate me. Now if it was so, —that is, if it will be, not merely no disappointment, but simply less agreeable, to you, to make such an arrangement, I think I cannot consent to it. On the other hand, if from a consideration of the season of the year, or any other cause, you really prefer boarding with me three or four months, it will be a great gratification to me to receive you, as well as an important convenience and benefit. On some accounts, it is most pleasant to keep house. But if you conclude not to do so till spring, it will be my endeavor to render your stay with me as agreeable as I can. I feel that you will have many faults to overlook in me and mine. But as our friendships, in this world, do not, or should not, depend on our finding the objects of them without faults, I shall expect that even my faults will give me some additional claim upon your sympathy and affection. And the consciousness that much must be forgiven, will lead us to forgive much, will it not? If so, how tender should *my* judgment of others be?

If being called, for a number of years, to experience an almost constant succession of outward vicissitudes and trials, and if being exercised, through life, with extreme mental sufferings, have any tendency to soften the character, and to increase in the soul the exercise of that benevolence which leads it to weep with them that weep, and enables it to rejoice in every accession to the general happiness which is enjoyed in this valley of tears; it has been my own fault if I have derived no benefit from having so long lived under the influence of such circumstances. And if a constant sense of dependance on God, not only for the outward blessings we need, but for the capacity to enjoy and improve them,—a sense of dependance resulting from a peculiar conformation of mind, which renders it less able to bear or to do any thing of itself, than is common,—has a tendency to produce a kind and charitable habit of regarding the weaknesses of others; I am the person, of all persons, on whose heart and lips should be written the law of kindness. All this I have said, not from the pure love of talking about self, but to shew you that I am prepared to love you, to rejoice in your happiness, to appreciate your trials, to feel for your sorrows, and to find happiness in affording you any advice or assistance, which, in my poor measure, I am able to afford. Believe that I have already begun to anticipate the time of your coming with many pleasant emotions, as the period which shall give to me a sister and a friend, one whose situation will awaken in my bosom some new interests and sympathies, and one whose establishment here will add another to the many reasons already existing, why I should prefer Boston as my residence to any other part of this "dim speck which men call earth."

With respect to our future intercourse, my sister, allow me to say, it depends on ourselves whether it shall be a blessing to us or not. The connection in this world which is soon to be formed between us, and which will be, in some respects, a peculiar one, may be a source of great mutual comfort to us. It may also, for reasons which will at once present themselves to your mind, be the means of advancing our characters to a higher elevation of moral excellence than they would otherwise have ever attained. And if this should be the case, (and, oh, heaven grant that it may;) how much we shall love each other on earth, how much we shall love each other in heaven!

My dear Mrs. W., may I be permitted to say,—and I would say it with deep humility, as one anxious to make the application to myself,—that our future usefulness and happiness depend much on our adoption, and practical maintenance, of one simple Christian principle, viz. a supreme desire that, in all we do, God should be glorified. Living under the influence of this principle, we shall have no jealousies, no rivalships. I shall rejoice in the attention you receive, in the influence you obtain, in the good you accomplish; and you will reciprocate these feelings. This blessed principle will prevent our setting up any personal interests in opposition to those of our Master. We shall rejoice that God is glorified, whether he is pleased to make use of our feeble services or not. Just in proportion as we place our happiness here, it will be placed beyond the reach of temporal vicissitudes, and the disquieting interferences of pride and selfishness.

And now, my beloved friends, farewell. I commend you to the grace of our unchangeable, covenant-keeping God. May he guide and bless you. May his loving-kindness sweeten and sanctify your union, and make it a blessing to you both for many years on earth, if such be his righteous purpose concerning you. And may we be mutual helpers, and comforters, and quickeners of each other in our pilgrimage through the wilderness of this world. And may our affection for each other here, be chastened and strengthened by the precious hope of its receiving its final consummation in heaven.

November 22. To-morrow will be Thanksgiving. I shall have to keep the festival "with bitter herbs." But I have been thinking to-day of the terms of the New-Covenant, which I desire to lay hold of for myself and my children. Now what are they? Temporal ease and prosperity? "I will bring you into the wilderness, and there will I plead with you, face to face." "I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." "I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished." "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." The whole history of the Church corroborates this testimony. The *promise* is, I "will not leave thee altogether unpunished." Have I not chosen this covenant as my portion, and the portion of my children, fully understanding that these were its terms? And do I repent of my choice? No. I heartily renew my desire to suffer affliction, if need be, with the people of God, rather than be left to take up with the pleasures of sin as my portion. Oh, to be brought more entirely into the bond of the covenant! Oh, for grace to lay hold on this covenant, for my children, as all my salvation and all my desire in their behalf!

23. This has not been a dull day. The work of praise is pleasant work. I think I can call on all the creation to praise the Lord, to be thankful unto him, and speak well of his name. I rejoice that saints praise him on earth; I rejoice that the spirits of the just made perfect, and my blessed husband among them, praise him better in heaven. I love to think of the time when I too, shall praise him as I wish. Now

Hosannas languish on my tongue.

But ere long I shall see Him as he is, be satisfied with his likeness, and serve him without weariness, and without interruption, forever and ever. Blessed, glorious hope.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, November 23, 1820.

I have perceived an alteration in my mind since that bitter bereavement which closed up forever, as to this world, one of the deepest channels through which the tide of my affections rolled upon the creature. An alteration, which I should think very natural, viz. a more ardent attachment to other friends, than I used to feel when I had a husband to love. This, I say, seems natural. An affectionate heart must love something. And, oh, most wretched is the being, who, accustomed to bestow on an object all the strength of a generous, ardent attachment, can find nothing, on the removal of that object, to excite and diffuse its exercise again. Though God should occupy the chasm left within by the removal of those who, perhaps, filled too large a space in our hearts, he does not require us to love him only. And, as we are social creatures, it is a mercy that we can feel the soothing glow of affection transferred, in some measure, from one to many, if we can love that one no longer. God has made us so; and I bless him for it. Who could live, having such a stream stopped, at once, and forever? Yes, my dear E., I love you more than I used to do; and am not jealous lest my affection for you should not all be reciprocated. And this experience is not observed in relation to you only, but also to others.

I did not see you enough when you were last in Boston. Our meetings often remind me of that world, where all the redeemed of the Lord shall be gathered into one common family, be made kings and priests unto God, and go no more out forever. Blessed day! Oh, could we remove the veil which conceals eternity from our view,———: but it is not necessary; for we have a more sure word of prophecy, which reveals all that is required to confirm our faith, and stimulate us to exertion.

My dear E., how little we realize our high and holy vocation, our unspeakable privilege in being called the daughters of the Lord Almighty,—if indeed we have been born of the Spirit,—our immense obligations, our glorious destination! If we realized these things, would it not be impossible for us to live as we do? Sinners saved by grace, through the application of the blood of the everlasting covenant, our suffering, bleeding, dying Surety and Redeemer, passed into the heavens to appear in the presence of God for us, having left us an example that we should follow his steps, and gone to prepare mansions in his Father's house for us; such an expiation, even the precious blood of Christ; such a salvation, from indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—moral ruin hopeless and eternal, to glory, honor, immortality and eternal life!—oh, realizing these things, could we live as we do; could we be so earnest to obtain the contemptible honors, immunities, and advantages of this poor, changeful world; could we so eagerly pursue its pleasures and deceits; could we be so discomfited by its perplexities and burdens; could it hold out to us, so often with success, its allurements, to tempt us from our Master and his service? Oh, no, no.

> What little things these worlds would be,
> How despicable in our eyes?

Well, dear E., these things will all be realized by us soon. Whether prepared for it or not, we shall soon see, not through a glass darkly, but with the clear vision of immortality. Oh, *how* shall we see? *Where* shall we be found?—In view of this awful subject, all is darkness and despair when we look to ourselves, when we look to any thing we are, any thing we have done, any thing we can do: it is all dark, dark, dark. But,—forever and forever, blessed be God!—we are not to look for justification to any thing in ourselves. There is an all-sufficient Savior. He came to call, not the righteous, but sinners, to repentance. His blood cleanseth from all sin. And he has said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Here is hope, hope for sinners. Here let us cast our anchor-hope for eternity. Oh, to be found in Him now; to be found in Him at that awful day when the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest; to be found in Him forever! As it respects ourselves, our great concern should be, to make our calling and election sure; and as He who hath called us is holy, to be holy in all manner of conversation: and as it respects others, that they may be brought within the bond of the covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure, and is all our salvation, and all our desire.

I hope you remember Wednesday evenings. I think I sometimes have much satisfaction in praying for your children. I do feel as if God will bless to them your instructions and prayers, and those of your dear husband. I do believe that God will accept this free-will offering at our hands. Has he not said, "If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." And hath he said it, and will he not do it? Hath he promised, and will he not perform? Let us plead with him for faith to lay hold on his covenant for ourselves and ours, and believe that he will make sure to us those gracious terms of it, "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the Lord; my Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." Gracious covenant! Even so, amen. Let it be unto thine handmaidens, even according to this good word which thou hast spoken!

November 25. I am distressed to find my heart disturbed with the workings of pride, on a subject with respect to which I had hoped it was at rest. Oh the intricacies of the operations of this law of sin!—Now, oh thou meek and lowly Jesus! I do desire to yield myself up wholly to thee; to be, not only satisfied, but pleased, with that station which thy wisdom assigns me. If it be thy pleasure to remove me from a post in which I never was faithful, and set another in my place, oh give me a heart to pray that she may be more faithful than I was. Oh my Savior, I fly to thy blood to wash away the guilt of my past unfaithfulness, to make me more engaged in duty for the time to come. Enable me cheerfully to take up my cross and follow thee to that station in thy Church which thou seest to be best for me; and that, not from the pride of submitting with magnanimity to that inevitable evil, but from simple, cheerful love to thy will, and confidence in thy wisdom! Above all things, oh dear Redeemer, clothe me with humility. Make me ashamed to desire a great share of human approbation and admiration, when thou, my Lord and Master, didst have so different a lot during thy short and sorrowful life!

The person of sensibility, who reflects a moment upon the situation of Mrs. Huntington at this period, will not be surprised at the strain of remark in the last extract, and in others of a similar character to be introduced hereafter. She was now to resign the station, and, in some important respects, the place in the affections of the beloved people of whom her husband had been the pastor, which she had so long held, to another. More than this. She was to *witness* the transfer to another, of the peculiar attentions which, as the wife of the minister, she had, for so long a time, been accustomed to receive. Is it strange that, in these circumstances, she should feel, deeply feel?

Yet the struggles of which she speaks were confined to her own breast; and their existence there, was not even suspected by her most intimate friends. During all the transactions embraced in the calling and settlement of another Pastor, her wonted cheerfulness was never observed to have forsaken her. None appeared to be more highly gratified than she did, by the restoration to the church and congregation of the privileges of a stated and settled ministry. And, from the arrival of her successor, Mrs. Huntington manifested for her the warmest friendship, reposed in her the most entire and affectionate confidence, improved every opportunity of obtaining for her the respect and attachment of the people, and appeared to rejoice in the attentions she received. Such was the strength of her religious principles, the elevation and disinterestedness of her piety.

TO MRS. H. OF BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, November 27, 1820.

My dear sister. I am reading the life of Henry Martyn. It is a precious work, and I would not be without it. You ought to own it, and so should every minister's family, if it is but to show us what a Christian can be. Common believers ought to blush, on comparing themselves with that holy man. For myself, I have almost been tempted to question whether I know any thing of that disinterested and noble and efficient principle, which was able to carry him onward to an eminence of practical godliness so distinguished and so wonderful. To see a man possessed of all the tenderest sensibilities of our nature, with a heart alive to all the enjoyments of social intercourse and refined life, voluntarily sacrificing them all; and what, if possible, is more, to see a man of strong and powerful talents, abjuring the cultivation of his mental faculties, excepting so far as such a cultivation could be made to subserve a higher end; to see him forsake all for the self-denying life of a missionary and a martyr, with such a singleness of purpose, and such a constancy and intenseness of exertion, is a noble proof of the efficacy of Christian principles, when they are permitted to produce their legitimate results. And why are there no more Henry Martyns? Why do we go lean from day to day, when the same full fountain of grace, which yielded him all his supplies, is open to us also? Taste, and live; taste, and thrive. Jesus Christ, the great beginner and carrier on, and finisher of the faith of the meanest disciple, is the root on which every saint must grow. It is our own fault if we are feeble and withered branches.

I think I have never seen the blessedness, and the safety of living wholly on Christ, so much as of late; nor so much of his infinite fulness, which is open to all his people. It is a good way to be saved by his grace. We do not pray enough for the greater sanctification of Christians. How much more God would be glorified, if Christians were holier, and more like their Savior; if they were not satisfied with just grace enough to give them the hope of salvation? Then we should not remain always babes, but be advancing to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

December 7. How much more would Christians accomplish, if they possessed more singleness of heart, a stronger and steadier purpose to live for God's glory! The Lord saith, "Them that honor me, I will honor." To labor and suffer for Christ, with a simple reference to his glory, would secure to us great personal comfort and peace of mind, and, generally extensive usefulness. In heaven there is no selfishness. It would be sufficient for any holy being to occupy any corner of the celestial world in which his Lord had placed him, if he might behold, and be an instrument of, the manifestations of His glory. It would be no matter to him where he was, if the gracious presence of God was there. Oh my Father, do I not feel a little, *little* spark of this spirit?

24. I had some sweet moments at the communion today. This is increasingly a precious ordinance to me. It seems to me a blessed thing to be swallowed up in God, to lose ourselves in him. These transient glimpses of heaven are unutterably precious. The sermon to-day was on the treachery of Judas. I feel that my heart is by nature the same as his was—desperately wicked; and that if I were, for one moment, abandoned by my great Keeper, the distance between my present moral character and that of Judas, would soon be lost. Oh that, as we have, this day, received Christ Jesus the Lord, we may walk in him! This is my petition and my request, in behalf of myself, and of this dear church. Amen.

27. I have spent some happy moments to-day, in the exercise of an humble hope that I am a servant of God. To be this, seems to me the highest happiness; a happiness of which earth and hell cannot deprive us. No matter where we are, if we are engaged in doing the work of God. What is earth; what is time; what are all created things; when God and eternity are placed in the opposite scale? Oh to be his forever in the sweet valley of humiliation!

31. I am brought, through grace, to the close of another year. Have I made any progress in piety the past year? And should I be, this night, summoned "to meet the Bridegroom," what reason have I to hope, that I should be permitted to go "in with him to the marriage?"

In the first place, I humbly trust I feel a more settled and habitual purpose of soul to be wholly the Lord's. It seems to be more evident to my own consciousness and judgment, that it is my deliberate choice to take God for my portion, leaving all other matters to his wise disposal; that, although many scenes of worldly interest, almost daily, obtrude themselves upon me, and engage too much of my attention, yet the favor and enjoyment of my God do, in my practical estimation, infinitely outweigh them all, that I can, with some degree of propriety and truth, say, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord.

In the second place, I humbly believe, that I do more habitually rejoice in the government of Jehovah, as holy, just, and good, and see a beauty in every intelligent creature finding his happiness simply in being the servant of God, to do his will, and promote his glory, than I used to do. It seems to me an excellent and glorious thing, for a creature to lose his own interests in those of the blessed God; and, if I know my own heart, I do pant after this attainment more than after the acquisition of any earthly good. And I do believe that it is my habitual desire and purpose, to make the doing of the will of God my daily employment; though I am continually falling into sin, and not acting up to my own principles and desires: and it is my grief and burden that I do not perform his will perfectly.

In the third place, the example of my Lord and Master, and of the blessed saints and martyrs who have gone before to heaven, have a beauty and glory in them which put out the lustre of all other greatness; and I long for their spirit, in my poor measure, with such a desire, that, much as my feeble nature trembles at the prospect of suffering, I think I feel quite willing to be carried through the fire of tribulation, God helping me, if this blessed end may be attained. And the attainment of this blessed end I desire, if I am not deceived, not solely, or principally, to give me a stable hope of salvation, but chiefly, because conformity in heart and life, in desire and pursuit, to the will of God, appears to me to have, in itself, a moral beauty which outweighs the loss of temporal ease and comfort. This, I think, is my settled feeling; more so, I humbly hope, than it was at the beginning of the year.

In the fourth place, I humbly trust I see more than I did a year ago, of the glory and beauty of the way of salvation which God has provided—*salvation wholly by grace.* Indeed I can conceive of no other way in which we could be saved. Salvation from first to last, by the grace of God, through the merits of the blessed Redeemer, seems a wise, a holy, and a good way of salvation. My soul rests upon Christ. And here, I feel, is a firm and sure resting place, for the spirit which has been tossed on the troubled sea of its own efforts to procure acceptance with God. I desire to live upon Christ, daily, and hourly; to draw all my supplies from this full fountain. And I think I perceive more of the blessedness, and feel more of the "quietness," of thus living, than formerly.

These are some of the reasons of the hope that is in me. And I, prevailingly, do not doubt, that a work of grace has been begun in my soul; because these desires and feelings, if I have them, are not the fruit of the natural heart, but of the Spirit; and I do think, after repeated, careful, and prayerful examinations, that I have such feelings and desires. And it is my fervent wish, to forget the things that are behind, and press on toward perfection; to be found, living or dying, the servant of God, placing all my happiness in him.

The darkest sign against me is, I think, the want of humility, of a broken and contrite heart, day by day. I do desire to hate sin more. But the feebleness of the resistance I make to it, in watching against declensions from God, distresses me. There is also much of the detestable feeling of pride still in my heart. Blessed Savior, undertake for me! Go thou with me through another year, if it is thy purpose to spare me so long; and be my righteousness, my strength, my sanctification, my consolation, my all in all.

During the year which she closed in the pious and instructive manner so interestingly described in the above extract, Mrs. Huntington wrote, and permitted to be published, anonymously, a Tract, entitled, "A Letter to a Friend recovered from sickness," and a book for children, entitled, "Little Lucy, or the Careless Child Reformed." The Letter makes a part of No. 88, of the publications of the American Tract Society at Boston. The story of "Little Lucy" is highly interesting; and parents, as well as children, may be profited by its perusal.

January 4, 1821. I am in a quiet and happy frame. My future path and circumstances look peaceful, because they will be just what my God pleases. It is my settled desire never to sit down as at home, on this side Jordan. *To be the Servant of God*, living, and dying, and in eternity;—this is happiness.

6. This day I set apart as a day of fasting and prayer, (not absenting myself from my family,) in reference, particularly to my dear little Joshua; that, having been graciously carried through his weaning, he may be wholly the Lord's. Notwithstanding interruptions, I have had a very solemn day. I read in the morning, parts of the 4th, 5th, 6th, 8th, and 9th, chapters of Deuteronomy. I had a sweet and solemn sense of the unchangeableness of God, and of his gracious covenant, and of my obligation to believe in the certainty of all his engagements. I viewed the covenant made with the children of Israel and their seed many hundred years ago, as the same, substantially, with that which believers are permitted to embrace now. Oh the marvellous grace of God! As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts! Some part of the time, I think, I felt a wrestling spirit in prayer; a sense of the presence of my God, of the meanness of temporal things, of the wonderful grace manifested in God's entering into covenant with me, a transgressor, a rebel; some sweet assurance that he will be my God, and the God of my children; and some precious consolation in the reflection, that all this grace is not promised for my worthiness sake, but on account of the obedience unto death of the incarnate Son of God, that it is the purchase of his infinite merits. Oh to cleave to this covenant forever!

I feel as if I had gained some strength to-day. It has been, on the whole, a good season; though my mind was, a part of the time, disturbed by interruptions. And now Lord, I take thee for my portion, and the portion of my children, forever! Accept me and them as thy servants, thy children; and do with us according to thy word! Amen and amen.

12. I expect Mr. and Mrs. W. next week. My mind is quiet and tranquil. Unused as I am to the kind of care which their boarding with me will occasion, especially connected with the peculiarities of the case, so wounding to memory and to nature; I cannot but feel, that, much as I love Mr. W., and much as I expect to love his wife, this

is a trial. When it was first proposed to me, I thought it could not be. But it is so evidently the call of duty, that I dare not refuse. And I feel so much peace in the desire I have to glorify God, that I am willing he should choose the way. It seems very unimportant to me how other matters go, if my God will enable me to be his servant and to glorify him. "None of us liveth to himself," has been a sweet text to me of late. So would I live, blessed Savior! forever. Amen!

13. Surely I have reason, if any one has, to feel like a stranger and a pilgrim on the earth. All the ties of near relationship, my children excepted, by which I was bound to this world, have been, one after another, sundered. And now I wish never to have any of these earthly ties renewed. My relationships are in heaven; I feel a peculiar, peaceful, melancholy, satisfaction in this consciousness, daily. It seems like a still small voice from the world of spirits, admonishing me to be girding myself to my journey, and setting my face homeward. It is well, Father, it is well. Only help me to cling to Thee forever; only remember me, in life, and in death: and I ask no other portion. Thou knowest best. Do with me as seemeth good unto thee.

19. In conversation with a mere child of the world today, my natural vivacity and openness led me to a cheerful and lively carriage, which I am afraid had the appearance of levity. But it was very far from my heart. I am, sometimes, in danger from this quarter, notwithstanding all the discipline with which I have been exercised. I do believe it is a settled principle of my heart to desire to glorify God. This is my joy; that for which I wish to live, to die, to be raised again. But, alas! though this is with me a settled principle, how deficient am I in its habitual application? How often do I lose sight of it? or, rather, how seldom do I refer all that I do, in the common affairs of life, to this end? O Lord! teach thy sinful child to watch over these wandering affections, which so often get entangled in the things which my principles and my judgment do not regard as I regard thee! Let me not be diverted from the things not seen, by the deceiving trifles and cares of this visible, but transitory world!

TO MRS. H. OF BOSTON.

Boston, January 23, 1821.

I should have been concerned, lest your kind and flattering commendations of me should produce an effect on my mind, which you, as well as myself, would disapprove, had I received them at an ordinary time. At present, however, I am passing through a course of discipline, which makes me feel that I am dust and ashes; so that I am not in quite my usual danger of self-elation. I cannot but be affected with your tender expressions of kindness. But the more I feel that I am nothing, the happier I am. And, my beloved friend, it is now my desire, hereafter to make the promotion of the glory of God my object, my end, my happiness. I wish to seek no other, to desire no other. But oh! it is a hard lesson for poor, depraved nature. Yet I think I am willing to suffer, if I may but learn it. Oh, to remember heaven as my home; Christ as my portion; and myself as made only for Him, to be his servant; and to let him choose the place where, and the work by which, I shall serve him; to lose my will in his; my interest in his; to love the Church because it is his body, and to choose nothing but what he chooses! This is what I am laboring after.

January 27. My birth day. I am this day thirty years old. I wished to have spent the day in fasting and prayer, but could not. I have had little opportunity or time for retirement, and my soul has, consequently, been in a languid, earthly frame. I can have no spiritual prosperity without more time for secret prayer, than I have been able to devote to this important and delightful duty of late.—Mr. and Mrs. W. came five days ago. My feelings have, thus far, been wonderfully less tried than I expected. Oh, to consecrate myself *anew*, soul and body, and spirit, to the Lord, from this time forth, and forever.

February 17. I have been, for some days past, in a state of criminal distance from God, of worldliness and of sloth. My secret prayers have been short, and hurried, and formal. I have been trying to have my heart broken before God to-night. I long for a humble, a contrite heart.

To-morrow, I am, if providence permit, to attend the holy communion. There are several things for which I wish to be enabled to wrestle with God, when I draw near to him at his table. Particularly, grace, to use all temporal mercies with a reference to his glory; to be more engaged and spiritual in family prayer; to redeem time, that I may have more opportunities for secret devotion; and to be humble, that I may not think so much of the good opinion of men. Next week is assigned for the ordination. I ought to be much in prayer, for Mr. W. and the dear flock, as well as for myself and children. Oh, to weep over my sins! Blessed Savior, let to-morrow be to me a strengthening, humbling season.

19. I enjoyed, I trust, something of the presence of my Savior yesterday. The grace of God, in taking such a worm, such a rebel as I am into covenant with himself, is wonderful. Oh, what am I, and what is my father's house! I felt that I did not deserve the crumbs which fell from my Master's table. But hitherto I have been nourished with the children's bread. Oh, to glorify God, in my body, and in my spirit, which are God's!

21. The day is past, which has given to this people another minister, to occupy the place of him who will ever live in my fond remembrance. I have not been in as prayerful a frame as I ought. My mind was too much occupied with personal feelings. And yet, I hope, I felt that I had no interests in opposition to those of God, and that the predominant desire of my heart was, that he would glorify himself. Oh, for humility! Oh, to go with my face in the dust, forever! Backslider is my name. Yet, "whom he calls, them he also justifies; and whom he justifies, them he also glorifies." Here is my hope, in the unmerited, rich, sovereign, and unchanging love of God. Here I cast my anchor. Here let me take up my rest forever.

TO MISS ——, OF BOSTON, AT ——.

Boston, March 9, 1821.

My dear S. I have been reading a letter of yours, this afternoon, with which I was much interested; and, although I do not expect to suggest to your mind any new truths in reference to your present circumstances, I feel a strong desire to write a few lines to you this evening. This desire results, if I know my own heart, from an earnest wish for your welfare, and the humble hope of saying something which the great Searcher of hearts may be pleased to bless to you.

I have many reasons, my dear S., for being interested in you. I love you for your parents' sake. And I love you, as being one of the lambs of that flock of which my dear husband was so recently the overseer; and I cannot but rejoice when any of these "little ones" are gathered into that spiritual kingdom, which is dearer than any, than every, thing else, to all the members of it. Your situation at present, my dear girl, is a critical one. God has been calling you in many ways of late, and I do hope that he is now, himself, preparing your heart to answer the call—"Wilt thou not, from this time, cry unto me, My Father, thou art the Guide of my youth?"

Let me entreat you to be earnest in religion. Remember that no great object is likely to be obtained, without persevering diligence, and a courageous determination not to be defeated by difficulties. If this is the case in reference to temporal objects, the attainment of which is opposed only by natural hindrances, surely it is the case with spiritual things. If the acquisition of human science can be accomplished only by labor and diligence, when the object of pursuit is often pleasant and agreeable to the natural taste, oh, with what earnestness, and strength of effort, must that spiritual knowledge be sought and labored after, which is eternal life, and the acquisition of which is rendered so inexpressibly difficult, by all the moral hindrances which result from a nature wholly averse and opposed to it? Difficult indeed, impossible would it be for us to obtain this best of all knowledge, the knowledge of ourselves and of the Lord Jesus Christ, were not the grace and strength of Him, who is able to save to the uttermost, promised to all, who really seek them. "It is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" and, *on this account*, we are exhorted to "work out our own salvation, with fear and trembling."

Remember, my dear S., *you* have a part to perform in this great work. Strive to understand what that part is. In reading the blessed word of God, carefully distinguish between what He has engaged to do, and what he requires you to do. Do your part faithfully, and he will certainly perform his. When I say you have something to do, I do not mean that you can do any thing which will serve you as a ground of justification, any thing to lay the Most High under any obligation to bestow his mercy upon you. What the precise connection is, which God has established between those means and duties which he prescribes to his creatures, and the attainment of his blessing, we do not know. Nor is it necessary we should. One thing we do know,—that it is the duty of every subject of God's moral government, to observe all the statutes of the Lord, to do them. You are called upon to seek first the kingdom of God, to strive to enter in at the strait gate, to ask that you may receive, to repent and believe the Gospel, to enrol yourself on the Lord's side, to renounce the world, and take up your cross, and follow the Savior. Do you say, 'I cannot do this?' I answer, Has not God commanded you to do it? And does he command us to do what we are unable to do, what we cannot do if we will? Is there unrighteousness with God?

Do not encourage, on slight grounds, the hope that you are a Christian. Remember, my dear S., *you are now laying your foundation for eternity.* Solemn thought! Soon every man's work must be tried, what sort it is. Do not rest satisfied so long as the all important question, 'Am I a Christian or not?' is undecided. Dread nothing so much as putting your hand to the plough, and looking back; as beginning to run well, and being hindered by a tempting world, or a subtle enemy, or a treacherous heart. Determine, in the strength of the Lord, that you will persevere unto the end, that you may be saved. The time is short. Heaven is worth laboring for. And, in due time, you shall reap if you faint not.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, March 14, 1821.

I wish I could tell you of our spiritual prosperity. Some of our good people are much engaged in religion; but the number of such is small. The followers of the Lord Jesus must be driven away from all their carnal resting-places, before we, as a church, shall look forth, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. We are a little band, and we are in the enemy's country. We must be more watchful and spiritual than ordinary Christians, or we shall be in great danger of being carried away by the dissimulation of the enemies of the cross.

The Christian Church is a distinct community from the rest of the world, united by different bonds, governed by different principles, and controlled by different obligations, from all other communities; and the more closely it adheres to its distinctive principles, the more entirely it is, in the spirit and conduct of its members, separate from the world, the better for its true prosperity. We must be brought to declare plainly, by our lives and conversation, that we are supremely devoted to Christ, before we can expect a blessing.

I have purchased a house in a healthy and respectable part of the town. I had the advice of judicious friends on the subject, who unanimously recommended the measure. I shall, if providence permit, remove as soon as the necessary repairs shall have been made.

March 19. With a settled purpose and determination and choice, I now give myself, and all that I have, up wholly to my Savior. Oh for my children! None of them have yet chosen the one thing needful. My anxiety for them increases. And sometimes I hope, and sometimes I lose courage. Perhaps I could not bear to see the spiritual prosperity of my children. They may not stand up openly on the Lord's side, till I am removed out of the way of being proud of it. But, O my God! give me a token for good, lest my heart fail me.

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Boston, March 25, 1821.

You wish to know how I get along in my new situation. I am happy in being able to answer, very comfortably and pleasantly. My feelings have been much less tried than I expected. God is very good to me. His strong arm restraints and prevents the outbreakings of those corruptions, which would destroy all my peace of mind; though he shows me enough of them, to make me sensible that I ought to go in the dust all the days of my life. I think I never sighed after that cardinal grace, humility, so much as now.

When your note first came, and I read in it the question, "What are you doing?"; I intended to have answered, 'Striving to bring my evil heart to feel that the place God assigns me is best; that nothing is to be desired, comparatively, but grace to glorify him; that no creature should set up any interests in opposition to his; and that the happiness of every individual Christian is most effectually promoted, by his exertions for the general welfare of the whole body of Christ. I want to love the chosen of my blessed Lord and Master, a thousand times more than the promotion of my own private interest; to find my happiness in being made the humble instrument of edifying his body, the Church, in the way his infinite wisdom may prescribe, though it may be in a way hard to flesh and blood.' I said I *intended* to have given you this answer, for I then thought it was what I was doing. But to-day I have been so stupid, I could hardly say I desired any thing. The soul cannot thrive, it appears to me, without a great deal more time for secret prayer than I have had for some days past. Oh, this want of spirituality, this want of *heart*-religion, is a sad evidence of the low state of our graces, if we are Christians.

As to what I am "anticipating;" with respect to this world, I can hardly tell what, excepting that I know that, in every place, sins and sorrows and conflicts abide me. Oh, to add, None of these things move me from my stable hold on the Rock of ages; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy.

April 22. I find the world is still a snare to me. I once thought its lustre all put out, its illusive fascinations broken. It was, comparatively, laid at my feet: and, I was happy, though the stroke which made me view it thus, penetrated my very soul. Alas, alas! my vain and wandering heart! why dost thou still attempt to fasten thy affections on this world, or any thing in it? I have tried it, and found it vanity. God taught me to be happy in himself; and I did feel that I desired nothing else. Oh that, with tears of contrition, I might give myself, once more, wholly to my Savior!

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. L.

Boston, May 1, 1821.

Our dear sister Mary* is in a critical situation. I consider her recovery very doubtful. But she is a dear member of the body of Christ, and all is well as respects her I never saw her appear so amiable and lovely. Affliction teaches us our weakness and dependance, and the delightful lesson of feeling another's woe. It cherishes and improves all those moral sensibilities which enable us to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice.

I send you, under the care of the bearer, my dear daughter S., to spend the summer with you, agreeably to your request and my promise. I wish you to manage her just as you would your own child. Oh, that this summer might be the long desired season, in which the Holy Spirit shall effectually constrain her to set her face toward Zion, and give herself up entirely to the God of her fathers!

May 2. I find I have reason to be jealous even of innocent friendships, for they are prone to crowd my Savior out of my heart. So foolish am I, and practically ignorant. When shall I be delivered from the allurements of a flattering and dangerous world? I long for that inflexible determination of spirit, that settled, immovable purpose of soul, in regard to religion, which should enable me to oppose such a resistance to temptation, as to disarm it, at once, of its efficacy. "I am doing a great work, I cannot come down." My Lord Jesus Christ, I look to thee. All my springs are in thee. Oh let me, of thy fulness, receive grace for grace!

13. *Communion day.* My mind was sweetly solemn and serene, a part of the time this morning. I read the sixth chapter of Hebrews. It was very precious to me. I had some earnest desires after conformity to God, and preparation for his kingdom: and, at the communion, some brokenness of heart for sin, and some sweet sense of the

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* The late Mrs. Mary Huntington, wife of the Rev. Daniel Huntington, of North Bridgewater.

presence and preciousness of my Savior. There is nothing here to be loved, comparatively, but God. Death becomes, increasingly, to me an object of desire.

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER, AT N. L.

Boston, May 15, 1821.

My dear S. I received a letter from your aunt immediately after your arrival in N. L. But I begin to feel a strong desire to hear again how you are, and whether you are pleased with your new situation. It has been my prayer, that this removal from the noise and bustle of your own town and family, might be sanctified to you; might lead you to reflect on that peaceful, happy world, into which there shall in no wise enter any thing that defileth; that world whither our dear, dear earthly counsellor and head has gone; that world which is constantly receiving all the wisest and best who have lived in this. Are you prepared for that world? This is the question I long to have you put to yourself. And now is the best time. Why should you delay it? And if conscience tells you that you are not prepared for it: oh, my dear S., do not rest, till you have some evidence that you have begun to attain the preparation prescribed in the word of God. What will it profit you, if you gain the whole world, and lose your soul?

Your dear aunt Mary is quite ill yet. Indeed she has been worse ever since you went to Connecticut, though she is now considerably relieved. Her cough is very bad. I am afraid she is going to leave your little cousins motherless. Oh, what a solemn thing it is for children to lose a good parent! My heart still aches when I think of your loss. And yet, your parents gave you to God; and father, mother, and all other friends, are nothing without Him. If he is your Father, it is sufficient. He will carry you, under the shadow of his wings, through the wilderness of this world. He will lead you safe through the snares spread beneath your feet by the subtle enemy of your salvation. He will sustain you under the sorrows of this life, which all find a life of trial. He will guide you by his counsel, and afterwards receive you to glory.

May 18. I feel myself greatly deficient in that charity which seeketh not her own. I therefore resolved, this day, to labor hereafter, by the grace of God, to seek chiefly, not my own happiness alone, but the happiness of others also; and this, not in relation to this world only, but also to the next. I resolved to ask myself, daily, What can I do to-day for the good of those about me, or of those whom I shall meet? Help me, Lord, neither to expect nor desire a return of love on the part of others,—that idol which I have sighed after so much; but to labor to do all the good I can to others, even in opposition to indifference or neglect.

25. I long to take my place at the feet of my Savior, and never wander from him more. There I would sit, and weep, and mourn over sin. The pardoning mercy of my God makes my backslidings look deeply criminal and odious. Oh, to render to my blessed Lord a perfect, an unwavering obedience; to forsake him again no more forever. My tears flow at the remembrance of my hateful ingratitude. I feel that I am weak, and my corruptions are strong. A flattering world holds out its allurements; and my vain affections are enticed from Him whom I desire to love with my whole heart. But, if sin must dwell in me, blessed Savior, let it not reign over me! I have been laying my case before my covenant God,—praying him to weaken my corruptions and sanctify me, whatever means he sees to be necessary for the accomplishment of that end. Even so, Lord! All these thine enemies, who will not that Thou shouldst reign within me, I bring to thee. Slay them utterly, I pray thee; and thine will be the praise forever.

30. I attended the prayer-meeting at Park-Street church this morning at five o'clock. I enjoyed it. It seemed delightful to meet with the dear people of God, though I felt as if I was not worthy to appear among them. I felt a sweet love to them all, and some longing desires to be diligent in doing the work I have given me to do here. Oh, to inquire every day, and be governed through the day by the answer, What can I do to-day for my Savior, in my own soul, in my family, and in all over whom I have any influence? Oh, to be faithful as one that must give an account.

June 7. Rode to-day with Mr. and Mrs. ——, and two other friends. My mind was, a part of the time, sweetly calm and tranquil. I felt the spirit of a pilgrim; and that, though my dear husband was not there, he was in a better place. This world looked very beautiful, as God's world, and my path to heaven. But I felt that it was not my home. No, no. Nearly all my early relatives have passed through the wilderness, and their feet are planted on the opposite shore. I must go forward. Help me to do so, thou Author and Finisher of my faith.

10. I have been ready to long after death, as the only means of releasing me from a captivity which I feel to be my sorrow and my sin. I groan, being burdened. I have to day received afresh the seal of my adoption, externally, into the family of Christ. I *did* renew my choice of him. My soul glories in the choice. I would not go back to the enjoyment of this world for all it can offer; no, not if I were sure of ultimate salvation. I feel as if I should sit in some sad corner, and weep after my Beloved.

12. A few weeks since, I went to see a young man, a former acquaintance of mine, in a decline. He has of late attended one of the Unitarian meetings in town. I conversed with him respecting his future prospects, with tenderness and affection. To my astonishment, that visit has been made the subject of a newspaper sarcasm, is much talked of, and much misrepresented. My natural feelings instinctively revolt from being the subject of public allusion; and, had I anticipated such a trial, it would have disturbed me greatly. As it is, however, I am astonished to find, that it does not move me. If I have had any idol, it has been my good name. But as I should not dare, under the like circumstances, to refuse a compliance with a similar request, I feel willing to abide the consequences. Two things comfort me, and are causes of thankfulness:—that, in looking back upon the interview, I do not remember one word which I said, that I now wish unsaid, or that I was influenced by any improper motive; my simple wish was to do good to a soul which, I saw, must soon pass into eternity;—and that now, I am not thrown into any disquietness of spirit by angry feelings toward any of the persons who have been concerned in this matter. I feel a sweet spirit of love, and compassion, and forgiveness toward them, and

a sincere desire that God would forgive them, if it is opposition to his truth which is thus exhibiting itself. My mind has been very happy, since the facts I have mentioned came to my knowledge. I thank my God that I do not feel angry or impatient, or revengeful; but that I feel the opposite emotions. This keeps my mind very peaceful.

And now, oh my blessed Father, hear me in two requests. Let me not be subjected to the strife of tongues, any farther than I shall be enabled, by thy grace, to turn it to a real advantage, in growing, by it, more watchful, and humble, and weaned from the world, so that my influence in thy cause may be rather promoted than hindered. And let it be the means, in some way, of advancing thy glory. Oh, let me not be, even the innocent cause of hindering that interest which I love better than any thing beside.

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER, AT N. L.

Boston, June 13, 1821.

I hope you will strive to render yourself worthy of the affection and confidence of your friends. Your present advantages are greater than you have hitherto had; so that I am anxious to have you improve your time, and make the most of your present situation. But all the learning in the world will not make a person useful unless he is determined to be so. I want to have you constantly keep in mind, that you were created to glorify God, and that the proper end of all knowledge is to do good. You are not too young to do good now. You can set an example of neatness and diligence to your school-mates. You can please and gratify your good friends, by your active and cheerful compliance with all their wishes. And you can let the little circle of your associates see, that you hate and despise vanity, and pride, and selfishness, and falsehood, in every form. My dear S., never forget that you were made for God; and that your glory and happiness is to be his servant, as the angels are, as the glorified saints are, as all holy beings in this world are, so far as they are holy. Join yourself, my child to this blessed company—the household of God, *now*, while you are young; and you will be blessed indeed.

TO MISS ——, OF BOSTON.

Boston, June 28, 1821.

It quite pains me, in prospect of my intended removal to my own house, that, on account of the distance, I shall not see you, my dear friend, as often as I have done. You have been the companion of my tribulations; and the thought of being so circumstanced, in any way, as not to be frequently with you, saddens my heart. But then, beloved, I hope to live with you forever. And when my mind fixes its contemplations on that haven of rest which we hope to reach, after our stormy passage over the troubled ocean of this life;—when I reflect on the peaceful, blessed home, at which we hope to arrive, after passing all the dangers and all the sorrows of the intervening wilderness; I am refreshed. Yes, my sister, my eyes fill with tears of hope and joy, as I write, at the reflection that, through grace, I trust this felicity awaits us. "In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." And faithful is He who has promised.

For myself, I believe I am not sick of the world on account of its vexations and trials. Few have more friends to love dearly than unworthy I. And yet I do believe,—putting the dread of death out of the question,—there is nothing here, which I would not leave any moment, to go and be with Christ, which is far, far better. My dear Miss ——, I feel, a great deal of the time, that I have no cause for uneasiness but sin. You thought, and I thought, my present situation would be a trying one. But God has made it very easy and pleasant to me. I long for a grateful and humble heart. I am afraid of nothing but myself. Do, dear friend, pray that I may glorify God. Sometimes every other object looks light, and vain, and not worthy of an anxious thought. Oh, to be found just in the place God appoints, and doing the work he appoints, and bearing the trials he appoints; to find my happiness in all this. It is sweet to be wholly at His disposal, to lose our own interests and will in his. This is what I long for; and it is refreshing to believe, that I shall one day attain it.

July 13. Since I last wrote in my journal, I have passed through an eventful and interesting scene. I have left the parsonage house, and am established by myself, in a distant part of the town, remote from most of our beloved people, alas! no longer mine. I was supported under this trial beyond all my expectations, though I have had some hours of bitter suffering. The moment of leaving that habitation,—the scene of so many enjoyments, where I had spent eleven of the happiest years of my life, where I had loved and lost my husband, where I had experienced deliverances, and spiritual comforts, numerous and inexpressible,—was full of agony. It seemed like sundering myself from the last relic of departed joys. And the sense of loneliness I felt on first entering my own house, I cannot describe. All alone! Where, oh where the eye, the heart of sympathy; where the ear that will listen to the sorrows of my soul; where the being whose interests and hopes, whose joys and sorrows are identified with mine? In all the wide world, my eye rests not on such a being. I shudder, and throw myself, as a weary and helpless stranger, at the feet of the widow's God, the orphan's Friend. —I do not have those sensible comforts, nor those spiritual desires which I long to feel. I have had some glimpses from above, which have cheered me; but they were transient. Faith seems weak.

It is my desire to set up my altar to the Lord my God, and to consecrate to him all I have. I desire that HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD should be inscribed on every thing in my house.—As to my situation, it is pleasant and comfortable, so far as it can be. And if I had more of the presence of my Savior, I should covet nothing better or greater. I want comfort, joy in my Lord, such as I have had. Help me, O my God, to labor after holiness; to wrestle and strive for it, and never give over till I have attained perfection in it. Then shall I have perfection in happiness.

22. I have had more spiritual comfort of late, have felt more of that peace which the world knows not of, than for a long time. Though I desire to wait patiently all the days of my appointed time, till my change come, yet the prospect of one day loving, and serving, and glorifying my God perfectly, is inexpressibly consoling. Oh, shall I see

Him as he is? Shall I love him as I ought? Shall I glorify him to the full extent of my power? Then let me begin the work now. Let the holy flame of love kindle in my soul a godly zeal, to all duty, and against all sin. If I cannot be perfect here, let it be my constant desire and effort to press forward toward perfection. I have had a pleasant day. I think I do esteem the Sabbath the best and sweetest of all days.

TO MRS. L., OF N. H.

Boston, July 24, 1821.

I have been waiting, with great impatience, to hear something further of the state of our dear E. How gladly would I see her. How much it would contribute to my happiness, could I be permitted to lend my aid to the dear sufferer; to sit by her pillow, and whisper to her the consolations of the Gospel,—consolations which, blessed be God, I trust, in all their immeasurable length, and breadth, and depth, and height, belong to her. But this is denied me. The last information I received concerning her, was through Miss C. I understood that she was in a very happy state of mind. She certainly has been a sufferer, early inured to sorrow. I scarcely can refrain from tears, when I reflect how early and how constantly her path was, and has continued to be, marked with affliction. But if these trials have been the means of inducing her to set her face towards Zion, why should the remembrance of them pain me? God loves all his children with an infinite and unchangeable love. Surely then, all the varieties of their existence and circumstances are the appointments of that love. All things, therefore, shall work together for their good.

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, July 30, 1821.

I have just finished the Life of Samuel J. Mills. He was a rich blessing to the world. His disinterestedness and self-denial, his liberal plans and efficient exertions, quite put common Christians to the blush. The longer I live, however, the more I am convinced that we are made to do good in different ways. And every one's great wisdom lies in being able to determine correctly what he is made for, and to press towards the highest attainments in that precise way. But though all were not made for Missionaries, all are required to feel such a degree of interest in the salvation of men, as to be disposed to do what they can to promote it.

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, August 1, 1821.

The day your husband called on me was a very trying one. A day when it became necessary for me to displace and look over many things, left by the hand of him whom a righteous God has taken from me, and which I could have wished might never have been moved, while I live, from the places which he had given them. I do not know that the sense of sorrow occasioned by that dispensation, was ever greater than on that day. And since, I have had moments in removing, and when I first found myself alone in my new habitation, of almost insupportable sorrow.

Do not think, however, that I am habitually gloomy and unhappy. No, through the grace of God, I am enabled to say, Worlds would not tempt me to recal my dearly beloved husband to the toils and troubles of mortality. He is gone. I feel the stroke which leaves my heart to bleed. But who am I, to complain of the hand which has inflicted it? Could I feel more of his presence, who, after all, is the only fountain of blessedness, could I experience that entire satisfaction in him alone, that exclusive love to him, which shuts out all inferior desires; which I humbly hope I have experienced in times past; what more could I want?

My dear E., the principal reason why we have no more spiritual enjoyment is, that we do not wholly renounce all expectations of happiness from the world. Look at Brainerd, and Martyn, and others of a similar spirit; how much they experienced of religious enjoyment. We read their history, and regard them as phenomena in the moral world, and hardly think of trying to imitate them. But why may we not imitate them? Were they not of like passions with ourselves? Was not the world the same to them that it is to us? Oh, for that inextinguishable thirst after conformity to God as our chief good, which will lead us to be satisfied with nothing short of it; which will enable us to oppose a resolute and effectual resistance to the temptations of a flattering and deceiving world!

August 5. I heard an interesting sermon to-day, in which the preacher spoke much of the believer's future glory; the crowns, and diadems, and splendors, and honors, of heaven. I felt as if heaven was not so much an object of desire to me on these accounts; and that honors and crowns would ill become so vile a rebel as I am. But the prospect of *perfect holiness and conformity to God!*—this, oh this is heaven. It seems to me but little matter what place I have, if God choose it, though it be but that of a door-keeper in his house. That will be the happiest place for me which is assigned me by my blessed Lord. If I may behold his glory, and do his will, and grow in his likeness, I would be anxious respecting nothing else.

This has been a good day to me. I think I had some communion with my risen and glorified Savior at his table. His example looks most lovely. I thought to day, that I had never mourned for the sins of God's dear people, *because they dishonor the precious name of Christ*, as I ought. Oh, to long, and labor, and pray, for my own sanctification, and that of others, that my Savior may be glorified!

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Bridgewater, August 20, 1821.

You have often, my dear Mrs. ——, been present to my thoughts of late, especially at the time of my removal from my late beloved habitation; and I was strengthened and comforted by the remembrance of the comfort wherewith you were comforted of God, under similar circumstances. I cannot say that I experienced those clear and supporting manifestations of my Savior's presence, under that trial, which you did, and which I humbly trust I have done before. My mind seemed so crowded with cares concerning the present, and overwhelmed with recollections of the past, that it was hardly capable of any connected and rational reflections. Yet when I felt myself in a degree settled, I think my heart was enabled, in some humble measure, to return unto its rest. I think I felt that, instead of murmuring at the removal of comforts once enjoyed, I could bless God for those which he had continued.

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." There is more happiness described in this single passage of Scripture, than I can form an idea of by accumulating all the combinations of felicity, drawn from mere earthly sources, which can be expressed or imagined. And yet, strange as it is, I am continually prone to cheat my soul out of the blessedness which it might derive from the fountain of life and comfort, by wandering away to the broken cisterns which my reason and conscience are convinced can never satisfy. Depravity this, which may well be considered desperate; that, with the most certain and unquestionable evidence, derived from experience, of the unmingled felicity which attends a life of communion with God,—felicity, which, though fully satisfying, can never satiate the soul, we are still so ready to embrace every vanity, calculated to lead us from God, which an alluring world, and a subtle adversary, can hold out to us!

My experience, the first year after my beloved husband's death, was *comfort.* My sins seemed laid asleep; and I thought the stroke, which had sundered me from the chief source of my temporal enjoyment, had also stamped upon the world an impression of uncertainty, and vanity, and tastelessness, which could never be effaced. But alas! I now feel that my present duty, as well as experience, is *conflict.* I find it to be unspeakably difficult to keep my affections with that steadiness of determination, that engagedness and fervor of spirit, and that fixedness of eye upon the things which are not seen and eternal, which become me, which God requires, and which will make me happy indeed.

TO MRS. W., OF BOSTON.

Bridgewater, August 22, 1821.

My time since I have been here, has passed quite as pleasantly as I expected. I usually feel best at home, however. And just now, the approach of that solemn anniversary* which must ever bring with it recollections most affecting and interesting, under circumstances so like those in which I was placed two years ago, cannot fail to cast over my mind a shade of sadness which I find it difficult to remove. I have passed some moments of inexpressible sorrow since I left you, though their continuance was short; sorrow like that when my soul was fainting under the anticipation of a stroke, which I could never steadily contemplate till its actual infliction; a stroke the effects of which must be felt while I live. But the Lord inflicted it. This quiets me. And shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? Yes. He gave, and I bless him for it. He took away, and I still bless him. He hath done all things well. He is good giving, good withholding, good taking away; and I would trust him forever.

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* Of the death of her husband.

But when I reflect upon my dreadful misimprovement of a dispensation, so eminently calculated to rouse me up to spirituality and entire consecration of soul to God, to a sincere renunciation of a world which had been proved so unfaithful, and to an active and diligent performance of duty, I wonder at myself. What can I expect but repeated sorrow, till I shall learn, what I find it so hard, so unspeakably hard to learn, to live to God alone? But I do hope this is my desire. I do hope I am willing to suffer, if I may be purified and made fit for the Master's use.

Let us, my sister, dread nothing, but a separation from Him whom I trust our souls love., Let us fear nothing, but that He should "let us alone." Let us determine to rest in nothing but him. Sometimes I feel that the day is far spent, and the night at hand; and that what I have to do, I must do quickly. But at other times, I find myself forming plans, and indulging in dreams, of earthly happiness. Delusive hope!

I think, my dear friend, that our declensions always begin in the closet. Those moments of holy communion with God, which we sometimes enjoy, have a sanctifying influence on all the concerns and duties in which we are engaged. But if the seasons which we set apart for secret prayer, are trifled away with frivolous and vain thoughts and desires, or if they are seasons of weariness, when the mind spends all its strength, perhaps, in laboring to feel; they will do us little good. Not that they should be omitted. Oh, no. But God forbid, that we should be satisfied in such a state. God forbid, that we should ever live contentedly at such a distance from him, as will make our prayers "a burden and a task."

How is your good husband? I trust the Lord has much for him to do in Boston. Trials he will have. They will do him good. They will give him more singleness of heart toward God; and this is worth suffering for. Oh that he may enter into the labors of his beloved predecessor; water what he planted, and gather what he sowed; and when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, may they appear with him, and rejoice together over their mutual work!

TO ANOTHER FRIEND IN BOSTON.

Bridgewater, August 22, 1821.

I was unable to see you during your illness. I called at Mrs. ——'s while you were confined to your room, with the intention of extending my visit to your house; but learning from her how sick you were, and presuming that I could render you no service, I gave up the idea. But, though I have not seen you, I did not forget, or cease to love you. And it was with unfeigned satisfaction that I heard, from Mr. ——, of the serenity of your mind in your then dangerous circumstances. Your hope of final salvation has, I trust, acquired a consistency and stability, from this recent trial of your faith, which compensates you for all that you suffered.

The Christian, in this world, is an unapt scholar. God has undertaken to prepare him for heaven. He has determined that this shall be done. But there is almost every thing in the way, to hinder and oppose the accomplishment of this benevolent purpose of the blessed God. Within, a nature wholly and inveterately inclined to evil, and without every thing calculated to operate powerfully and successfully on the depravity of his nature. Alas! how could he get forward, did not the promise of God secure to him his sanctification, as well as his justification? This, blessed be God! it does. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." But this promise must be fulfilled by the instrumentality of means. And oh, how kindly, how mercifully, how patiently, does our almighty Redeemer chasten, and reprove, and refine, and purify, his children. Sometimes he pours upon them the temporal blessings of his providence. But if this turns away their affections from himself, he visits their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless, his loving-kindness he does not utterly take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. Every stripe is intended to embitter to them that sin which He hates, that sin which cleaves to his children while they live, and that sin which he is determined to destroy. And shall we not trust our whole souls with this blessed Being? Shall we not be willing that He should manage our concerns in his own way, if he will but make us like himself, and prepare us for himself? Oh, yes, yes.

Two things we ought especially to be anxious to learn under our trials, an humble, penitent, brokenhearted conviction of our sinfulness and unworthiness; and a filial, practical, quickening sense of the unspeakable goodness and love of God, and of our obligations to be entirely and eternally his. Surely motives are not wanting, to rouse us up to unremitted diligence in the service of Him who has called us to his kingdom and glory.

September 1. The hand of the Lord has again touched me. On the twenty-fifth of last month I was called home to receive the last parting sigh of my dearly beloved Joshua. Thus the fond and cherished babe left me, at a moment's warning. It fell upon me like a thunderbolt.—But my mind is comforted now. My child, my lamb, is in heaven. He has gone to the Savior, who said, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am." Amen. Lord, help those that remain to follow!

Evening. I go about from one room to another, but the places and things which once knew him, know him no more. I find not the object I seem to be seeking. My tears flow; my heart is full; I feel, almost as if there were no sorrow like my sorrow. My mind does not leave every thing here, and fasten itself on heaven, as it did when my dear husband died. I am not comfortless; but I have not the "strong consolation" which I then had. It seems as if Joseph were not, and Benjamin were not. But oh, let me not undervalue my remaining mercies—my pleasant children, my thousand, my unnumbered blessings!

8. I live, though death has smitten another of my number. Elizabeth was taken from all her sorrows and her sufferings, eleven days after my sweet babe. I have no doubt that both these little ones are in heaven. They were given to God; and they are not, because He has taken them. As it respects Elizabeth, I can *see* that the dispensation, which released her from a body of disease and death, which confined and cramped all the efforts of the soul, and set the spirit free, to unfold and expand in the service of God, is a wise and merciful dispensation.

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER, IN BOSTON.

Andover, September 20, 1821.

My beloved child. I rejoice in your return.* I thank God, who has once more brought us so near each other, and given us the prospect of again meeting on this side the grave. Boston must look sad and solemn to you, my dear. All gone; not even the house of your father to go to. But there is a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. There is your heavenly Father, and he is inviting your returning footsteps thither. There is your Savior, who has gone to prepare a place for *you*, if you will accept one. Come then, my dear child: you have early seen the treachery of earthly prospects;—you have seen a father cut down in the high noon of his usefulness; you have seen the sweet, the promising little scion which sprung up from the parent root, instantly withered in all its beauty; you have seen that all on earth is change. Come then my child, and secure a better, even an enduring inheritance. There is a friend who will never forsake you, a happy home which can never be taken from you. There, the inhabitants shall no more say, 'I am sick.' There, there, will be no more sorrow, nor sighing, nor parting from friends; but from the eyes of all that blessed family, God will wipe away all tears forever. There you shall meet the father who loved, and cherished, and prayed for you; and there the brother and sister whose former places on earth will know them no more. Unless you become a Christian, you bade them a long, a last farewell. My eyes fill with tears, my heart aches, at the thought that it is possible. Oh my children, my beloved children, let me not be disappointed in this one hope—that, having been separated on earth, we may dwell together forever in heaven!

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* From a visit, of some months, at New-London, Conn.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.

Boston, November 6, 1821.

You wish to be informed more particularly of the circumstances of my sweet Joshua's death. When I left him on Saturday, he appeared as well as usual. The heat of the weather had made him rather thin and pale; but he was not otherwise unwell. He continued well till Wednesday morning, when he was seized with diarrhea. This continued, sometimes apparently abating, till Friday morning; when it became apparent that his disease was the dysentery. The doctor came to see him; and advised his removal to Mr. W.'s, where he could have all my friends near him. I think he must have fallen away greatly on Friday night, as the doctor did not speak of him as in a dangerous state, at the time of the visit just alluded to. On Saturday morning, the little sufferer was accordingly removed, forever removed. After he arrived at Mr. W.'s, he was, by the direction of the physician, put in a warm bath. But no one seemed to be aware of his real situation. Early on Saturday morning, I was sent for, and arrived at about half past one o'clock in the afternoon. Light of heart, I sprang out of the carriage to inquire for my child; for I had been told that he was not very sick, and his being at Mr. W.'s confirmed me in the opinion. Mrs. W. told me that he was now very sick. Still, however, my infatuation prevailed. I thought he could not be very sick, and be there. Judge then of my agony, when I entered the chamber, and saw my child, the darling of my soul, not as I left him, but engaged in his last conflict. I instantly recognized the hand of death, for I had seen it too often to be mistaken. Never shall I forget that look. Changed he was, but beautiful. There was a composed look, of meek and patient suffering; he looked, as if he had quieted himself to die. His little eyes were already fixed. He did not know me. Oh, what a moment!—About an hour and a half after this, the last struggle commenced. I took him in my arms; and, in a few minutes, he breathed his last sigh, as sweetly as ever a spirit disencumbered itself of its earthly habitation; and, before I knew it, he was in heaven.

The greatest shock was the first. But my mind was unsettled all that, and the next day. I hardly knew where or what I was. So little sensible had I been, how this darling babe had entwined himself about every fibre of my heart. On Monday, however, I was relieved and comforted. But that was one of the most solemn weeks of my life. The strong and intense excitements of it were almost too much for my feeble frame. So that when Elizabeth was taken sick, which was on the next Sabbath, I sunk at once. She was soon released from all her sorrows. And I live to tell the tale.—Who knows how much he is capable of enduring? I have since spent a few weeks at Andover, and am now quite well.

Sister Mary's health is exceedingly delicate. Her situation is, in my opinion, very critical. With unwearied care, she *may* live some years; or she may soon be taken from us.

Our family, my beloved sister; seems to be dissolving. God smote the head when he called your and my dear father, (for I loved him as a father:) and the shock seemed to extend itself to the branches, one after another of which has, since that time, withered and fallen. But how sweet to be permitted to believe, that, of all the dear number removed, not one is lost! All safe, safe forever. God grant that we may meet them there, where there is no more death.

TO MRS. H. OF BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, November 28, 1821.

God has seen fit to afflict you, my dear M., often and severely. But you have already had abundant experience of the benefit of affliction. And, though I do hope that this sickness will not be unto death—at least not for many years to come, I also hope that you are resigning yourself sweetly into the hands of your faithful, covenant God, and experiencing the preciousness of the promise, "I will never leave nor forsake thee." It is a solemn thing to look steadily at death. He is an enemy whom we are all prone to place, in our conception, at a distance, before we are willing to contemplate him. And with some of us, the fear of death is so strong a constitutional infirmity, that we are sometimes apprehensive that we shall dishonor our Savior in our last trial. But even death is a conquered foe. When the Son of God finished the work of redemption, he conquered all the enemies of our souls, (if we are his,) and laid up for us, in himself, sure and adequate supplies for all our necessities. The cross of Christ is the certain pledge of the Christian's final victory. Our Lord is Lord and King of death and the grave. Faint they may; despond they may; yet, in the mount of difficulty, shall the Lord be seen, and command deliverance for his people. They shall not utterly fall; and even their misgivings and their fears, shall abound to the glory of His grace, who giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might increaseth strength.

Trust yourself then, my sister, with the kind Father, who hath borne you thus far through the wilderness on his faithful arm. Trust yourself with the dear Redeemer, who loved you unto death, and who has gone to heaven to prepare a place for *you.* Trust yourself with that good Spirit, who has been carrying on your sanctification, in order to your preparation for heaven, these many years, though you have grieved him so often. Trust yourself with Jehovah—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who keepeth covenant forever and ever. Keep hold of the cross of Christ. None ever perished there. Thence draw all your hope of pardon and of victory. Though your sins may look very great, and your meetness for heaven very uncertain, yet never forsake the cross. The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; and He that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.

December 9. The situation in which I am placed, I sometimes think, is unfavorable to my spiritual interests. Perceiving one's self an object of interest and regard every where, and receiving constant attentions and flatteries, have a powerful tendency to strengthen the natural vanity of the human heart. But it is the weakness and perverseness of my heart, of which I have most reason to complain.

I am not strong to resist. I love the tenderness and kindnesses of earthly attachments too much. My natural disposition, in this respect, is a snare to me. The world cannot solicit me by any of its grosser allurements. But the temptations it holds out to me, under the forms of pure, refined, and elevated enjoyment resulting from social connections, are ensnaring. And the fact that it is so, at times, darkens all my evidences. Blessed Savior, enable me, practically and constantly, to feel that thou art the only satisfying portion.

11. I have had much sweetness in prayer this evening. I think I did feel that I renounced all hopes, all desires, which could possibly make me less devotedly and entirely the Lord's. I would be wholly his. I am his servant. Let all my future arrangements be made with a reference to his glory. This is what I want. Oh, to be swallowed up in the desire to glorify God in his own way! Strengthen me, Lord, to maintain a constant singleness of heart towards thee. The promise in Ezekiel, xxxvi, 25, 26, 27, was very precious to me this evening; especially these words, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Oh my blessed God, do so for unworthy me! Tear away every idol which I, through the weakness of the flesh, have served! Tear it away, though every fibre of my soul is rent by the separation!

15. I have been much comforted of late, in reading a volume of Watts' Sermons, on "The world to come." It is, on the whole, an excellent book. His remarks on the necessity of "an acquaintance with Christ," and the evidences it affords of piety, presented me with a somewhat new aspect of evidence in my own soul in relation to the subject. I could not but hope, that I was more acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ, than with any other being in the universe; that I had more intimate communion, more delightful intercourse, with him; that I was connected with him by stronger interests, more entire dependencies, more awful obligations, more fervent love, and more habitual choice. Is it not so, oh my Savior, who knowest my struggles, who art acquainted with every inward conflict, every desire of my soul? Who gives me strength to fight, who supports me in my trials, who holds up the feeble purpose of my heart toward God, who speaks light and life to my

soul, who is the friend, all-knowing, all-supporting, of my spirit, but thee? Can it be delusion? Blessed Jesus, do I not love thee? Wert thou mine—the God of my life, and all created nature beside blotted out forever, should I not still possess that which is all to me?

16. I am reading, with great delight, the "Memoirs of Halyburton;" which I think one of the best religious biographies I have seen. Some of his experiences, seem very similar to what I have learned of myself; especially his conflicts with sin, particularly in "things innocent or lawful carried to excess." Some of them are the result of what I have thought amiable and praise-worthy—the strength of my social affections. But all this only shews me what a fountain of desperate wickedness the human heart is, which can turn every thing into an occasion of sin. Let me remember then, that my sin is not in having these affections, for the blessed God gave them to me, our first parents had them in innocence; but in the unruly and uncontrollable indulgence of them—an indulgence which may easily be known, by its rendering me, while it continues, satisfied with earthly attachments and hopes, lessening my spirituality, leading me to desire something which God sees to be not best for me, and, above all, drawing my heart from God as my chief good.

But after all my wretched wanderings, I humbly believe, I can appeal to my blessed Master, that he knows it to be my habitual choice, to part cheerfully with every thing which he sees is inconsistent with his glory. Friends, health, life, property—all, are his. And I would be his, for life, for death, forever. Oh, it is sweet to be wholly his; to abide near him; to behold his glory, to be transformed into his image! What, oh what, can the world offer! And yet, how weak do I find myself to resist its temptations? I take my place, blessed Savior, at the foot of thy cross; that cross which crucifies to the world, to sin. In thee, I know there is strength to conquer.

TO MRS. T., OF D.

Boston, December 23, 1821.

What a desert is this world without God! You and I, my dear H., have been bereft of our dearest temporal enjoyments. It was the Lord who did it. And what shall we think of it? Did he inflict the stroke, to leave us just like the rest of the world? God forbid. Rather let us choose to abide in the furnace till life shall end, than be left to take up our portion here. We have found God our rock, our refuge, our strong deliverer, our unfailing friend; and that, when all the men on earth, and all the angels in heaven, could not help us, He held us up; He smoothed for us the pillow of agony; He poured oil and wine into our wounds. He hushed us to peace on his own bosom, when the storm was beating heavily upon us, when refuge failed, and we said, of every earthly thing, Miserable comforters are ye all. And shall we, can we, now forsake Him? What! leave our God, after all this? No, no. Let us clasp our Savior's cross to our bosoms, and die, rather than be separated from it.

My heart aches, and my eyes fill with tears, at the thought of my sinful propensity to seek in some earthly good, the happiness I know can be found in God alone. This is my sad case. But then it is my daily grief and trouble that it is so. And I do humbly believe that, with my settled purpose, I choose God, above, and so far as he sees best for me and most for his glory, against every thing beside.

And my dear H., the day is coming, when, if we do love our Savior, this feeble, fluttering flame shall give place to the glowing, inextinguishable, holy ardor of perfect love; when we shall no more have to mourn the unstable affection, the vascillating purpose, the heart easily ensnared by the vexing, impertinent vanities of this poor world. And what can earth offer in opposition to such a prospect as this? Should she bring all her stores, and lay them at our feet; one glance of God, and they would vanish to nothing. Is it so? What then has God taken from us? A good, a great good indeed, a good which we may have thought almost necessary to our *spiritual* progress; but a good, the loss of which God can make up, which he can infinitely overbalance, in the communications he may make to us of himself. This we know. Let us then desire nothing, which he sees it to be most for his glory to withhold, or remove. Let us keep an eye steadily fixed on the upper world. Let us draw daily, from the fulness in Christ, pledged grace—grace to pardon, grace to sanctify. Let us go straight forward, wherever our Master leads. Let us expect no rest, till we lay down our sins and our conflicts together in the grave.

December 23. This year is nearly closed, and it has been an eventful year to me. In the course of it, one of the tenderest ties by which I was connected with earth, has been sundered. My Joshua was smitten. And my heart bleeds still? It was a heavy trial. But God showed me that I merited and needed it, and kept me from rebelling, (blessed be his name!) so that I gave up what he so suddenly demanded, without disputing his right so to do. The shock was not so great, however, as that occasioned by the death of my husband. Then, my faculties seemed stunned. I look back, and perfectly remember my feelings, and am sure that, for six or eight months after that event, my mental powers seemed all shaken by the blow. It was a different sort of life from any I had ever experienced. Afflicted as much as my nature could bear, on the one hand, and comforted and stayed up by the Omnipotent arm, on the other,—my intense exercises overpowered my poor frame, and I was like those who dream. But my sweet Joshua's death affects me with an inexpressible tenderness. Oh that its effects may be lasting! Beloved of my soul! dear, cherished, lamented child! May thy removal rouse up thy afflicted mother to more persevering and unwaving diligence in finishing her work!

January 17, 1822. I spent the evening at Mr. ——'s. Dear, affectionate, kind-hearted people! Never was unworthy woman connected with a society, whose kind offices laid her under more pressing obligations, than myself. But, alas, how little good I do among them! I am ashamed and confounded, at the view of my barrenness and unprofitableness. Do I love this dear people, while I am so neglectful of their best interests? Oh that the

Lord would cause me so to feel for their souls, as to lead me, constantly and importunately, to the throne of grace in their behalf!

21. Upon comparing myself with what I was last year, I cannot but fear that I am losing ground. It seems, on the whole, as if my "heart is" more "divided," and I am found, like Israel of old, "faulty." In prayer, I usually have some nearness of access to God, often have some sweet sense of my obligations to devote all to him, in my poor measure, as the holy angels do, some desires after this, and some meltings of soul for sin. But, alas! how soon all is gone! My temptations are many; and my strength is perfect weakness. Oh, world! world! world! I am helpless, and feeble, and tossed on thy dangerous seas; and, of myself, ready, every moment, to make shipwreck of the faith. Jesus, save me, or I perish!

I have been reading our blessed Lord's valedictory address to his disciples, and the text, "Every branch in me that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit," struck me forcibly. I felt, however, that I could lay over my case into the hands of the great Refiner with sweet satisfaction. Oh for strength to resist sin, that I may not be so often ensnared.

TO A FRIEND AT M.

Boston, January 22, 1822.

My dear Miss ———. That propensity to which you allude in your last letter, to dwell on the past and look forward to the future, may be the occasion of much happiness to us. If properly controlled and balanced by Christian principle, the retrospect of former years and former mercies, will awaken in our souls lively gratitude to Him, who has led us thus far through the land of our pilgrimage, and cheered the tediousness of the way by the kind communications of his own grace and goodness, and will present us with the strongest motives to a course of undeviating future obedience. Were our hearts right, the past would be contemplated with all the fervent emotions of gratitude, and the future with unmingled desires of glorifying Him, constantly and forever, who has made us to feel the weight of such immense obligations. But, alas! too seldom is this the case. The mind, ever searching for aliment suited to the sustenance of its depravity, is apt, in looking backward, to seize on those parts of our experience which have least of God and holiness in them.

We dream over the scenes which were pleasant to us, perhaps, because our self-love was flattered, or our pride gratified, our interests promoted, or our happiness sought; and we find them, at this distance of time, still pleasant, because they awaken kindred feelings with those we then experienced. Or, if pride and vanity are not distinctly exercised, we sometimes sit down, and brood over the past with a sort of sickly sensibility, which exhausts our mental strength in useless regrets for the friends or comforts which are no more, and induces a passive indifference concerning the present, utterly incompatible with efficient exertion. When we feel that this is the case with us, however engaging such remembrances may be to our disordered hearts, we should shake off, at once, the indulgence of them.

I well remember the time when I dared not look at the past. It was to look at a storm, which had gone by, and which, though it passed over without destroying me, was too fearful to be unnecessarily dwelt upon. I knew that, though the strength of the Almighty arm had upheld me when under the immediate infliction of that awful stroke, my heavenly Father had no where promised me strength to sustain me under the self-inflicted agonies of an unruly memory. And at that time, when I dared not contemplate the past, and could not calculate on the future, I felt more, than at any other period of my life, that, *to-day* was all I could call my own. Present duties and present trials; the one called upon me to rouse myself, this moment, from the listlessness produced by intense personal sufferings, to do something, if I had nothing to enjoy; and the other met me as what I did bear then, through God's goodness, and I could trust him for strength to bear at a future time, if that future time should find me a sufferer on the earth. It is at a moment like this, that we know the blessed efficacy of our holy religion. There is in the Gospel that, which the Christian, at such a moment, feels sustaining him. He knows he does not follow a cunningly devised fable. And had he a thousand souls, he would not be afraid to risk them on the truth of that Gospel.

You say, "Write me a letter of reproof and instruction." Alas! my dear friend, and do you really consider me capable of all this? I feel like a mere learner of first principles yet, and wholly unfit to reprove and instruct, by reason of my unfaithfulness in the practical application of even those first principles. But, much as I must be sensible of my own deficiencies, I believe I can say, in the sweet language of an Apostle, "This I wish, even your perfection;" and were I acquainted with your faults as intimately as you are, or had I ever observed any thing which struck me as a peculiar defect, I love you well enough to risk something in directing your attention to it. It is very difficult for us to judge of each other's constitutional weaknesses—unless they lie out on the surface of the character, and consequent attending temptations.

Whether there be some one besetting sin which attends the Christian, and exhibits the same, or nearly the same, specific form, through the various stages and circumstances of his progress heaven-ward, I know not. It has appeared to me, however, that our most distressing conflicts, are not always with the same sins, but with different ones, which acquire strength and power by the change of our circumstances. As self-elation may be our snare at one time, so a gloomy depreciation of our own powers may be at another; and, as sometimes we are in danger of looking no higher than earth for comfort, so, at other times, we may fretfully refuse the enjoyment of even those mercies which a kind God intends we should enjoy, and almost be in his case who chose strangling and death rather than life.* An obscure Christian could have but little idea of the temptations another would meet with, thrown into an intelligent circle, capable of estimating all that was commanding and all that was attractive in her character, and whose qualifications would ensure her the respect and constant attentions of that circle. And though none could envy the humble and more retired Christian her station, except as it furnished a comparative exemption from a long train of the most fascinating temptations, yet it certainly would not involve such high responsibilities, and draw in its train such a fearful number of mischievous consequences, in case of declension from duty, as a higher one. But, I believe it is our duty to rest satisfied, that God has placed us in the situation best for us; and, instead of comparing its advantages, and disadvantages, with those of others, we should endeavor carefully to inquire, What are the temptations to which I am now most exposed? What facilities does my situation afford me for doing good? How can I turn my present circumstances to the best account?

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* Job vii, 15.

In all our various situations in life, be they what they may, self is the grand hindrance to our going on unto perfection. The world flatters, and we love its flatteries so well, that we feed upon them, as Ephraim "on wind," till God rouses us from our deplorable delusion, and compels us to pronounce them worthless. Not that piety is one form of self-love; and that we embrace religion merely from a regard to our own interest. Self-love, in us, is a perverted principle, it is selfishness. It seeks its own good too eagerly, and in a wrong way. So far as it pursues its own happiness in that way and to that extent which are agreeable to the will of God, it is innocent and lawful. But the proper end of an intelligent creature's existence is, to promote his own happiness, in loving and serving God. This our natural selfishness does not. And it was to this principle I referred, when I said, that it is our hindrance in every thing praise-worthy. But let a soul be endued with the benevolent spirit of the Gospel, let it feel something of that holy flame which animates the saints above, let it be filled and controlled by desires to serve God as they do—to do his will, and promote his glory unceasingly, which is the true end of our being; and all the fascinations of the world would be poured upon it in vain. Nothing could promote the happiness of such a soul, but what advanced the glory of the blessed God. And it would find ways to effect its object. It would be seeking the advancement of the kingdom of Christ; and, in seeking it, would seek to bring others into that kingdom. May the time come, speedily come, when you and I shall feel this blessed flame, as I trust we desire to,—when we shall love God with all our hearts, and serve him without imperfection!

TO A FRIEND AT ——.

Boston, January 27, 1822.

I utterly condemn the habit of unnecessarily alluding to the faults of each other's children. It is a direct violation of the law of Christian charity, and of the spirit of our Savior's rule, "Do unto others," &c. Christians commit a great deal of sin in this way. If I have ever been inclined to it, I hope the Lord has shown me something of its demerit. Nor is the sin of taking occasion, from the imperfections of the child, to pronounce a condemnatory judgment on the management of the parent, much smaller. If we see defects in the parent or child, it is right we should, in the spirit of love, inform *them* of it. But we should never suffer ourselves to speak of them unnecessarily to others.

With respect to ——, I was immediately struck with her character, as exhibiting features of more than usual strength, and was pleased with her. In the plays of the children, she contributed her full share of amusement, and was accommodating. Our little folks were much interested in her. I think I observed in her also, in some other things, a blunt independence, a determined resolution to please herself, which did not seem amiable, which had too much the aspect of overlooking and disregarding the opinions of others. I cannot describe what I mean, better, than by saying, it was the reverse of that temper, which leads us to consider other people's happiness as important as our own, and to meet them half way in their overtures of kindness. Is it not probable, that this trait of character has been strengthened by her visiting so much among your people? It appears to me, this would be very natural, even where the constitutional tendency this way is not particularly strong. We all have a great deal of self-complacency; it is a weed which will grow in all hearts, and in all circumstances. How then can a weak and simple child, be expected to withstand the influence of indulgence, and flattery, and praise? How is it possible, that such dangerous stimulants can be applied, without producing most dangerous effects? Your people are, perhaps, much better than common; but there must be, not only piety, but good sense, and considerable knowledge of human nature, to place people on their guard in their intercourse with those children who are not amenable to them. I merely make this supposition, for perhaps I mistake in imagining that ——— has been accustomed to visit much without her mother.

As to what is the best method of managing this evil, I certainly do not feel capable, my dear friend, of advising you. If my simple thoughts, however, can be of the least service to you, I will suggest a few which occur to me.

In the first place, I should think this disposition would be best managed by gentleness and kindness. A proud spirit will not bear to be driven. Coercion must be resorted to when other means have failed; but a proud spirit, where there is at the same time generosity and self-respect, is most easily subdued by gentleness. I know many would say otherwise, and would call this indulgence. But the object to be gained is not abject submission, at a particular time when the fault has been exhibited—a smothering of wrong feeling from a fear of showing it; but *a conviction of the intrinsic evil of such a temper.* And certainly, this conviction may be best promoted by mildness, and a tender concern, which shall convince the child of the parent's love for him.

In the second place, while we are governed by the law of kindness, such a temper should be systematically frowned upon. And the habitual look of disapprobation, manifested by the parent, upon its first appearance, would do more, I think, toward subduing it, than those punishments and privations, which are sometimes resorted to. When the effects of this temper can be felt, the child should be made to feel them. If he is pained by the dislike of a friend, whom he has made no effort to please, he will remember, the next time, to be more cautious.

But, after all, those motives which are drawn from Christian principles, will always be found to be most effectual. Constantly holding up to the child, the moral evil of pride, its contrariety to the law of God, to the example of Christ, to the love we owe to him, &c., with a corresponding temper on the part of the parent, will, I believe, generally prove successful.

March 12. I returned to-day from a visit of a week at Bridgewater, where I have been on account of sister Mary's health. Thanks be to God, I find my dear family well. My time at B. was mournfully, but I hope not unprofitably spent. Every thing seemed solemn: every thing reminded me of days gone by, and "smitten friends" still dear to this aching heart. And sister is apparently sinking, though gradually, into the grave. How could I but feel solemn and sad? Yet I had some very precious seasons in prayer, especially yesterday, which was my dear J.'s birth day. I wished much to get home, to spend the day with him, but could not conveniently. I had more time, however, than usual on these occasions, for special prayer, and was much assisted. I think I never realized more the truth and excellence of the only way of approaching to God, through the great High Priest, than then; and never committed my cause to his intercession with more unreserved and confiding faith. I felt as if I gave myself, and my children, unreservedly, and unconditionally, to God, to be his servants, sincerely desiring, that all our circumstances might be ordered with reference to this end, as the highest good. Whether it be on earth, or in heaven, by prosperity, or adversity, I thought I could say, cheerfully, 'Amen, only let us be thy servants.' It seemed as if I could not let go my hold on the covenant and promise of God, all secured and ratified by a Savior's finished work. And it seemed as if that Savior received my suit, and accepted me, and my offering, according to his own unfathomable grace; and that all my ill deserts would not prevent his conferring upon my children the free gift of eternal life. This covenant, gracious and sure, I take as my portion, and the portion of my children, as all my salvation, and all my desire. Only let us serve him. Where, and how, I leave to his wisdom to determine.

TO MRS. H. AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, March 1, 1822.

My dear M. The wind is blowing a heavy gale, and the rain, at intervals, beating violently against the windows. While the storm is thus raging abroad, I have been thinking how safe is the Christian; how little reason he has to fear any thing but sin If the storms he encounters drive him forward towards his destined haven, they will not hurt him. The great danger is of being hindered in our progress toward heaven, and turning back to the shores of this world. Has our blessed Savior called us to follow him, and have we obeyed the call? If so, He, the Captain of our salvation, constantly observes and protects us; condescends to notice, and direct all circumstances respecting us. And, whether the duration of the period in which we must be tossing on our passage heavenward, be longer or shorter, all will be just as it should be, because it will be just as He pleases. Yet is he not happiest, who is nearest home? My better feelings say, Yes.

I expect to go at nine, to watch with Mrs. E., who is very sick. You will be awake some part of the night, and I shall be thinking of you. God will make all your bed in your sickness. Wearisome nights have been borne by many of the Lord's people before you. And he knows what you can bear

TO THE SAME.

Boston, March 8, 1822.

I feel my own heart to be too earthly to attempt adding any thing to those motives to resignation, the efficacy and preciousness of which you are taught so much better by the great Teacher, than you could be by any earthly friend. May He continue to put underneath you his everlasting arms, to baptize you with the Holy Ghost, to purify you, in the "fountain filled with blood," from every spot and stain of sin, that you may be adorned, and prepared to go in and sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb! There are Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, all the excellent and worthy that have ever lived since the world began. There are many of the dear friends of our pilgrimage, beloved ones, whose memory is to us like ointment poured forth. There are gathering in all the excellent and the worthy who are now, and who shall be, on the earth, from all the generations of men, till the end of time.—All brought to this glorious feast, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God! What a company! And there, above all, is the Savior, who hath loved us unto death, the great High Priest and King of our salvation; whom the Christian loves, and who hath said, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

March 24. It is my constant misery that I do not love God more. And I know by experience, that it is not in outward circumstances, either of one sort or another, but in our own hearts, that we must find the sources of our backslidings. Sometimes I think, that if I had not so many temptations from the world, I should get along better. But when these are absent, my common and lawful concerns will, in some way or other, operate in the same manner on my sinful nature. Thus it is proved that all the evil is in myself. If God should give me all the blessings of this life, and extend to me his grace, I should be spiritual. If he withheld that, though I imposed on myself all the abstinences and austerities of Papal superstition, I should be a wretched worldling. It is to the tendencies of my own depraved heart that I must look for the causes of my wanderings; in their amendment alone can I hope for the cure of my backslidings. One thing I *know;* if God should leave me one moment, I should plunge myself in irrecoverable ruin. His arm is my only bulwark against perdition. All the adequate causes of eternal apostacy are within me. Can I be saved? Jesus, I fly to thee.

April 3. I have felt more indifference to the world, a few days past, than for some time before, and a sweet feeling of desire and of comfort, when I think of leaving every thing here, and going to be with Christ.

5. Colquhoun on the Covenant of Grace is, on the whole, one of the best books I have ever read. It clears away all the sinner's common objections against the freeness of the Gospel offer, and removes the discouragements which keep him from Christ on the ground of his unfitness, better than any other treatise I have seen. The fulness and freeness of the redemption purchased by Christ are most delightfully exhibited, although the writer seemed to me somewhat shackled, in some parts of the work, by his peculiar views respecting the extent of the atonement. It has been a delightful book to me, especially the part which

shews that sanctification is secured by the terms of the Covenant. The way of obtaining sanctifying grace through the Lord Jesus Christ, and the certainty of obtaining it, because it is a purchased and promised blessing of the Covenant of Grace, are precious truths. Oh to live, with the simplicity of a little child, on this well ordered and sure Covenant, till that which is perfect shall be revealed! But grace will never end. Eternity will be forever swelling the unfathomable ocean of Jehovah's grace. And this seems very sweet to me. To be eternally indebted to God; to love him more and more, and be bound to love him more and more, by receiving that which will be continually magnifying his immeasurable grace, seems to be what I want. I love to have God receive all the glory forever and ever.

TO MR. ——, OF ——

Boston, April 8, 1822.

Dear Sir. In reply to the last part of your letter, allow me to say, I am afraid your opinions, or expectations, which ever you please, are not perfectly correct. "Expect not perfection, but insist on consistency," says Mrs. More. Many sensible, accomplished, elegant, and pious women may be found. But the angel which your imagination has pictured, and held up to your view as the only object upon which you could place your affections, cannot be found. Do not think I am trifling. The desire I feel for your happiness, makes me anxious you should form, and indulge only such rational and just desires as may be safely allowed, in a world where all is necessarily imperfect. Change of place and situation, in this world, can only be change of duty and trial. Far am I from believing, that all situations are equally favorable for happiness. This would be childish. Yet, if we have not the good sense, and sound principle, which will enable us to make the best of our present circumstances, we have no reason to believe we should be happy in any. To receive cheerfully and thankfully, all the good which heaven has now placed within our reach, and to moderate our desires and expectations for to-morrow, is true wisdom. The great secret of being happy is to keep the heart right, as you very well know. Where the supreme source of happiness is God, all will go well. The subordinate comforts which result from human relationships will be received with thankfulness, and their attending sorrows endured without that impatience and restlessness of spirit, which is the almost necessary consequence of disappointment.

If it be best for you, I hope your Father in heaven will one day bestow upon you, not indeed a perfect woman, but just such an one as His own wisdom shall judge the fittest for you. Acknowledge Him in reference to this subject. She must be the best wife for you whom the Lord chooses. I love to see Christians depending, with the simplicity of little children, on the blessed God, their God and Father, in all things. It is of great importance that a minister have the right sort of wife. It is surprising how much his usefulness may be retarded or promoted by her influence. Is it then a matter of so small concern as not to be worth carrying to the Lord? No. Ask his guidance and follow his providence, and you will find happiness even in this wilderness. But that kind and degree of solicitude which enfeebles our capacities for present duty, should not be indulged. A mind wasting its strength, either in hopeless regrets for the past, or visionary calculations for the future, is a pitiable object. God gives us this moment to employ for him. It is all we can call our own; and it demands all the energies and all the activities of our nature. How much is our progress in holiness impeded by spiritual sloth, that want of singleness of heart toward God, which would make us feel that our highest felicity must result from loving and glorifying him, and that this felicity is now within our reach, and an object worth laboring for!

TO MRS. H., OF BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, April 18, 1822.

Scarcely any subject has pressed itself upon my thoughts with more satisfaction, than that of the progressive nature of Christianity. I love to see the spirit of heaven diffusing itself, as it does, more and more, over the whole soul of the Christian as he advances nearer heaven. I think I love to see others growing in grace and glorifying God, though sensible that my own sloth and worldly-mindedness are rendered more apparent, by being compared with their spirituality and devotedness.

We have a new thing here,—a Union Prayer Meeting, attended by all denominations of evangelical Christians. The second meeting was held this evening, which the rain has prevented my attending. It appears to me, however, it will be very pleasant to see such a union, and to hear prayer for the same blessings offered up by those who have hitherto had little or no intercourse as brethren. Some are expecting great things from this union. Would that events may answer this expectation! We should not be faithless, but believing; yet it seems to me that the people of God are not yet prepared for a revival of religion. There is among them, too much conformity to the world, too much cleaving to beggarly elements, too little willingness to labor and make sacrifices for Christ, and to bear, so far as need be, his reproach, to justify any very strong hopes of an immediate revival among us. *It is when the servants of God begin to take pleasure in the stones and to favor the dust of Zion, that the time to favor her is come.*

TO THE SAME.

Boston, April 21, 1822.

I feel much concern, my dear M., at the last accounts from you. And yet why should I? God loves you infinitely better than I do. If therefore, he does not restore your health, his reasons are such as would satisfy us all, if we understood them. This I know. And when I think of you, my sister, I am more disposed to bless God than any thing else. What a mercy that your mind is so sweetly stayed upon Him, who is indeed true and faithful, and who has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!" Whatever we may think of it, it is an enviable thing to be nearly delivered from all the toils, and pains, and enemies, and pollutions, of this wilderness, to have nearly arrived at the boundary of the promised land of our everlasting rest. It is so. But, alas! I feel the subject to be too spiritual, too ethereal, for my earthly, grovelling mind to grasp. To be like the angels, to love and serve God with the singleness of devotion, the unceasing activity, the unmingled holiness, and the complete consecration of all the faculties to the blessed employment, which characterize their worship, sometimes looks so enviable to me, that I feel almost ready to die any moment to attain it. It would be thus with me always, were it not for the inveterate carnality of my nature, which cannot long fix itself upon the spiritual, the holy realities of the upper world. Yes, if the language of our hearts was, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God," we should be willing to die, and rejoice to die, as the best, the only means of attaining the accomplishment of our desires, at least when it became manifestly the will of our Father in heaven.

TO MRS. T., OF D.

Boston, April 28, 1822.

My dear friend. I believe I love you the better for all your mental trials. There is something in beholding our friends suffer in any way, which excites sympathy, and sympathy begets love. When all goes on smoothly with our friends, we think they can do well enough without us, and perhaps we do not feel so strong affection, where we view ourselves as wholly unimportant. This is doubtless wrong, but it is, I believe, true. In the sorrows which you were experiencing, when you wrote last, my dear H., I can, I do, sympathize: I sympathize in them all; in those which respect yourself, and those which pertain to your children. They are my own. And fain would I write something which may have a quickening influence on us both.

In the first place, let us beware of despondency, or a gloomy faithlessness in the Covenant of God's grace. It is true, we are all you describe, backsliders, rebellious children; who would, long ago, have wearied out the goodness of our Benefactor, were he not infinite in mercy. We may, on some accounts, be greater sinners than others, if guilt is to be measured by love resisted, and grace abused. This should humble us. It should lay us low in the dust, with the spirit of filial brokenness of heart before our injured and compassionate God. It should make us sigh and mourn under a sense of our pollution, and labor for sanctification. But it should not wither our strength, and consume our spirits in faithless sorrow. Oh, no. "Faint, yet pursuing," should be our motto. The spiritual sloth which results from indifference, and the spiritual debility which arises from unbelief, are equally dangerous to the soul. It is no less true in spiritual than in temporal things, "that the hand of the diligent maketh rich, but he that dealeth with a slack hand becometh poor." One of the benefits secured to believers by the promises of God's well ordered Covenant is sanctification. This was purchased for them by their great Mediator and Head, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Savior, to bestow upon his people the blessings he has obtained for them; and he will bestow them. He does not send us on a warfare at our own charges. He proffers us all necessary grace. All we need is treasured up in him in whom we profess to believe, and may be obtained by looking to him in the exercise of a lively faith.

Let us then, never be contented, while our spiritual enemies are unsubdued, but fight manfully the good fight of faith. Alas! I know not how it is, but there seems to be a something within us which prevents our resolutely determining to give our temptations no quarter. The world holds out her allurements, her flatteries please us; our pride, or our selfishness, is gratified; and we do not say to the ensnaring tempter, "Get thee behind me Satan." This is my greatest trouble—the want of singleness of heart toward God, the abiding, practical determination to resist every sin in its first specious advances. What ingratitude toward Him who loved us unto death, toward Him whom, if we are Christians, we love, after all, far better than we love all other things; toward Him for whom we should be willing to live, and labor, and suffer, and die!

We must be much in prayer for our children. We must daily give them to our God, to be his servants. We must take hold of his Covenant for them, as all our salvation and all our desire; remembering that "eternal life" is "the gift of God,"—a free gift, "not for our merits or deservings," but of his own unfathomable grace. Let our sins and short-comings in reference to our children, humble, but not discourage us. And, while we labor to know how we may most effectually promote their best interests, and strive after a corresponding course of conduct, let us remember that God knows all our difficulties and hindrances, the troubles we meet with, in ourselves, from them, and from the world which lieth in wickedness. And let us trust to His promise who has said, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

TO HER ELDEST DAUGHTER, AT BOSTON.

Bridgewater, May 9, 1822.

I received your letter, my dear S. with much pleasure. The good accounts you give me, of your brother and sister, rejoice my heart. I trust they will continue to deserve my approbation, by striving to do whatever they believe I would wish were I with them. If children knew how certainly a departure from the path of duty wounds the conscience, and brings sorrow and distress upon the mind, they would labor more earnestly to avoid sin. "The way of transgressors is hard," says the wise man; and he says the truth. God forbid, that any of my dear children should know the truth of the declaration, in its full extent, by experience! There is only one way to keep from sin; that is, persevering resistance to temptation, and prayer. Without praying, you will never successfully resist sin; it will be too strong for you. My dear children, you are in an enemy's country. Fear temptation, fear sin, fear offending God; but always remember, for your encouragement, that there is ONE who is able to help you. He loves to see little children looking to him for aid. And he has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

I have just come from your aunt Mary's sick room, and it is late; so I have only time to inform you, that this dear aunt has almost got to heaven. The pallid cheek, the hollow eye, the wasted form, the quick and laborious breathing, all indicate that the flame of life is nearly extinguished. A few more struggles of feeble, pained dissolving mortality, and all will be over. But your aunt is happy. She had a wakeful, suffering night last night; coughing incessantly, and burning with fever, and distressed for breath; and yet she told me this morning, that she never felt God nearer to her than last night, that she knew his hand dispensed to her every trial, and his mercy would be sufficient for her. What makes your aunt so happy in this hour of sorrow, when all the men on earth could do her no good? It is religion, my daughter. She has a hope which is as an anchor to her soul.

May 29. I have just returned from a visit to Bridgewater, where I have been to receive the last parting blessing of dear sister Mary. It was a sad and solemn scene, well calculated to soften my heart. I am depressed in spirits. All the solitude and sorrows of my own lonely state seem to break in upon me afresh; and my mind is greatly distressed with a sense of my hardness under all my own personal chastisements, and under this solemn providence. I have been trying to lay the matter before God, that I may obtain forgiveness for the past, and strength for the future; and, particularly, that God will ever go before me as my Guide, and never suffer me to do any thing inconsistent with his glory. I greatly fear and dread being left to do any thing myself. I would take the word of God as my only directory, and the grace of God as my only support, in all that I desire, and in all that I do.

TO MRS. S.,* AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, June 1, 1822.

I feel deeply, since my return, for your dear family. I know the heart-rending pangs you will suffer, when you will be ready to say, "All his waves and his billows are going over me; I sink in the deep waters, where there is no standing,"—and my heart aches for you. But I trust He, who speaks the word, and the storms of nature, and the more fearful storms of the spirit, are still, will speak peace to your souls. Strive, my dear friends, to exercise the disposition of a child, under this severe rebuke. Strive after the penitence of a child for the past, the submission and trust of a child for the present, and the obedience of a child for the future; and God will shew you how able he is to comfort you as a Father. I commend you, and myself, and our dear little ones to his grace. Let him be our portion, let him bless us, and all will be well—well for time, well for eternity.

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* The mother of Mrs. H., whose decease was referred to in the preceding extract.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. Y.

Boston, June 3, 1822.

In our dear Mary's removal, I feel that I have sustained another loss. The sweet, lamb-like spirit which she exhibited the last years of her life, and her increasing love for me, make me feel that another, whom I loved most tenderly, is gone. I feel that the world is losing much that has been valued. And were it not for the beams of light and hope which are shed upon it from a holier region, I should be ready to say, All is darkness and shade. Oh, to turn away our eyes and our hearts to that brighter world, where all is happiness without mixture and without end!

I am reading Owen on Spiritual Mindedness; and I find it a very trying book. But I hope, my dear sister, God will undertake for us both, and carry forward the work of our sanctification, amid all our hindrances from without, and all our discouragements from within. And if he does, it will be accomplished. It does seem to me that I love the spirit of humility, that I desire to take my place at the feet of my Savior, and never to think highly of myself again. Oh, the hope of deliverance is like cold water to a thirsty soul.

TO HER SISTER, AT KILLINGWORTH.

Boston, June 10, 1822.

I have thought a good deal lately of your dear boy; and, when praying for my own son, have often had much freedom in praying for him. Who knows but he may come up to take the place in the church of that dear departed grandfather, whom I never knew. God is wonderfully manifesting himself *for the seed of his people* at the present day. I do not doubt you daily give him to Christ as his servant. I think you should hope for great things respecting him. Pious laymen, at the present day, have an opportunity of doing almost as much for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, as Ministers. For my own children, I desire not to prescribe how or where they shall serve God. This I would leave to his wisdom, whether it shall be in heaven, or on earth, at home, or in the ends of the earth, as public or as private characters. But that *they may be His servants;* this one hope I would press to my bosom till I die. Not because I deserve any blessing. But because nothing is too much to hope for from that God, who hath given his only begotten Son to die for the redemption of man; and because that work is finished, and he can now glorify himself in our salvation; because he has promised that the Redeemer "Shall see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied;" and because he has declared himself the Covenant God of believers, "and of their seed after them." I have forfeited all claim to the Covenant of his grace a thousand, thousand times. Nevertheless "He is mindful of his covenant." Though we change, He abideth faithful. His purposes of mercy shall prevail, not only in opposition to our numberless sins, but to their utter destruction, if we are his children; and the top-stone of our salvation shall be laid amidst the shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it." Here is all my hope, for myself, and for my children.

June 15. This dear people often profess to have derived comfort and profit from my visits among them, especially in seasons of affliction. But it makes me ashamed to hear these things. I fear there are yet within me unexplored depths of iniquity. The remains of that constant enemy of my peace, pride, have shown themselves of late, to be still powerful. But I would open every secret chamber of my soul to God, and spread out all the defilements and deceits of my heart before him. He that trusteth in his own heart," says Solomon, "is a fool." God forbid that I should ever trust in mine! Oh for some spiritual strength, some spiritual feeling! I am becalmed in the ocean of this world. Jesus, great Captain of salvation, undertake for me, and help me to part with every thing which hinders and holds me back. Save me, Lord! save me!

TO MRS. S., AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, June 16, 1822.

All that can be seen here of nature, is quiet, and serene, and lovely. But my heart is sad, and so is yours. I take my pen to relieve my own spirits by communing with a friend. And to this motive is added another—that of extending to the solitary and mourning mother, the expression of my sympathy. Yes, I do feel for you, my afflicted friend. And all the shades of sorrow which pour their deepening gloom over your wounded heart, I know; for I too am a mourner. Who can tell the sense of hopeless solitude, the shipwreck of earthly expectations, which they groan under, whom the Lord hath written desolate? The sun shines the same, nature rejoices, and all the great machinery of universal providence moves on without interruption; but no revolutions can restore that which has been smitten with the touch of death. The chasm stares fearfully upon us; and we say of this beautiful world, "It is a wilderness, a desert!"

But this is the dark side of the picture. Nature has, and must have, some such moments, but they are not her best. And I would now endeavor to rouse both you and myself from these withering, these consuming recollections. It is sin to indulge ourselves in sorrow, so far as to unfit us for present or future duty. It is sin for us not to feel, that God can be to us more than any thing he has removed. What are creatures, what are all our comforts, without him? They are to us just what he makes them. And if he please, can he not still give us what we need of temporal comfort? O, yes. If we could but find our happiness now in what the angels do, how every earthly trial would lessen. And is it not wise, to begin at least, to place our happiness in what we certainly shall place it in, if we ever get to heaven? And what is the happiness of the angels? Doing the will, and promoting the glory, of God. And this source of felicity temporal circumstances cannot affect.

My dear Mrs. S., while you are meekly laying yourself under the rod of the Almighty, while you patiently endure as seeing Him who is invisible, while you say, with the spirit of a child, "All I have is his, let him do what he will with his own;" may you not be happy? While you labor and pray for those dear children; while you strive to fill, in some measure, to them, the place of their beloved mother, may you not be happy? While you are exerting yourself, in every way opened to you in providence, for the coming of Christ's kingdom, doing good to his members, and striving to promote his glory, may you not be happy? Yes, my friend. And this is heavenly happiness begun in a world of sorrow, where the sins and the pains of mortality often interrupt it, where the tear of grief often dims the eye, and the pang of distress heaves the bosom; but it shall be maintained through all the interruptions it meets with in the present state, and receive its consummation in that world where those who love God shall mourn and sigh no more.

June 24. Yesterday was S.'s* birth-day. I observed it as a season of fasting and prayer; to remember and confess before God, S.'s sins and my own, and our family sins, to spread them all out before the Lord, and seek the application of the blood of atonement, that past iniquities might not keep back God's mercy from my children. I especially desired to repent in dust and ashes of some of my own transgressions, particularly the sins of pride, and of a disposition to turn back to something in this world, either possessed or desired, for rest and comfort, and an unevenness of temper which makes me impatient with the daily little faults of my children, such as carelessness, noisy and inattentive behavior, &c. These things in them, I ought to mourn over as sins; but they should not ruffle or discompose my temper. I thought I desired, not only pardon for the past, but grace to resist all sin for the time to come. I had much freedom in prayer, and I hope some strength of faith in giving up my dear S. to be wholly the Lord's. I do trust the Lord will make her his, and that all my children will be the servants of God.

July 3. It is my fervent desire that the continual experience I have of the weakness and sinfulness of my nature, may make me very tender and pitiful toward my erring, sinning fellow-creatures; that, knowing how unable I am to resist temptation when left to my own strength, I may be charitable in my judgment of others, and, instead of harshly condemning the sinner, hate the sin, and carry it all to him who alone is able to deliver either them or me out of temptation! Lord, grant me a compassionate, charitable temper toward others, and constant, unrelenting severity toward my own sinful propensities!

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* One of her daughters.

TO MRS. T. OF D.

Boston, July 4, 1822.

Has not our Father in heaven the entire management of all the peculiarities of our circumstances, the lesser and the greater? And is it not safest, is it not best, for us that it is so? Let this be felt, and we shall rest in the belief that *all is just as it should be.* "They that believe, do enter into rest," even as to the things of this life, so far as they believe. If you are a child of God, he as certainly appoints and directs all the little vexations which you find so uncomfortable, and as constantly eyes the advancement of your interest by them, as can be the case with any of your heavier afflictions. Have you read Henry on Meekness? I found it a most excellent work. "We must be quiet," says this good man, under afflictions, as the air is quiet from winds. It is not well to be windbound in dullness and indifference; but tempests are perilous, though the wind be in the right point." The habit of feeling too deeply the unavoidable ills of life, is one into which the most interesting and delicate and generous of our race are most likely to fall. But it should be guarded against. The sensibility which is amiable and lovely, when duly regulated, becomes a most mischievous companion to its possessor when not thus regulated. You may say to me, "Physician heal thyself." But if I love you, I shall desire you to escape all the troubles which my want of wisdom and want of grace have occasioned me.

I have been thinking lately, more than usual, what our deficiencies in parental government are most likely to be: and I rather think we are in danger of erring on the side of indulgence. Many things would naturally incline us to this; and it is a fault which would bear most ruinously upon our children, especially upon our sons. It is of great importance that they should discover in us no inconsistencies, to lessen their confidence in our judgment, and no impatience and irritation at their miscarriages, to weaken their persuasion of our piety. While their faults should never be connived at, they should be met with such a spirit, as to convince them at once, that it is not the trouble they give us that disturbs our minds, but the sin they have committed against God. Absolute obedience should be insisted on. Nothing short of this should ever be allowed to answer. When we see the proud spirit rising, and threatening rebellion, let us take the Bible, and, while we shew our children the awful guilt we should incur by suffering them to resist our authority with impunity, let us assure them that, by the grace of God, we never will incur this guilt; that we will labor till our latest breath, to enforce upon them the reasonableness and the necessity of yielding an unreserved obedience to all God's commandments, of which, "Children, obey your parents in all things," is one. I was struck, a few days ago, with what God said to Ely concerning his children. See 1 Sam. ii. 27—30. It seems to me that no Christian parent can expect God to bless his children, unless he "honors" Him, by requiring of them obedience to all that he has commanded. And when they, ostensibly and unequivocally, fail of doing this, it should be treated as a great sin, with which God is especially displeased in them, on account of their peculiar relation to his Church.

Let me urge you never to yield to despondency. Remember him who hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The permission of these mental distresses on the part of God, is necessary to shew us our weakness. So far all is right. But we should not yield to them. We should not suffer them to cast a veil over our spiritual vision, and prevent our discerning the light and grace and strength of Him who is the Author and Finisher of all our graces, and all our hopes. Let us trust him forever.

TO MRS. W. THEN AT J., N. Y.

Boston, July 28, 1822.

It has been like October the last week. I don't know how it is, but autumn is my favorite season. It used to be dull to me. The falling of the leaves, and the undressing of nature, occasioned feelings of melancholy. But it is otherwise now. There is a pensiveness, a tranquil sadness, (if we can be sad without being unhappy,) cast over me now, by the return of this season; but it is a quiet, serene feeling, which whispers of spirits departed to a quiet world beyond the sky, where the hurried pursuits, and gilded temptations, and heart-breaking sorrows, of life, are unknown. That autumn of the soul, that peaceful advancement toward the termination of the season of trial, which the faithful Christian experiences when his labors and his conflicts are nearly over, seems, in the contemplation, very refreshing to me. But these enjoyments are for the *faithful* Christian. They must be gained by many a weary step, many a painful struggle, many a hard-earned victory. This is the time for resisting, striving, fighting. May we gird on the whole armor of God, and never lose, at least this one evidence of our adoption, a firm and resolute resistance of sin, the enemy that must be conquered, or all our hopes will be found to have been vain.

TO MRS. S., AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, August 2, 1822.

M. the Lord hath taken, and now S. is dangerously sick. You seem, my dear madam, called to various trials of your faith; and I suppose you sometimes feel, that your cup of sorrow is overflowing. Yet, notwithstanding all the heart-breaking certainties of actual experience, and all the dreary anticipations of unknown difficulties to come, let me say to you, my dear afflicted friend, Trust in the Lord, for "none of them that trust in him shall be desolate." "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." *He will not lay more upon you than he will enable you to bear.* Does he not know all your circumstances, all your necessities? And is he unfaithful, that he should call those who trust in his promises and seek his aid, to any trials which he will not give them strength to endure, to any duties which he will not give them grace to perform? "Commit thy way unto the Lord;" yea, "trust in him at all times." If he cuts you off from creatures, it is to drive you to himself. Let this end be gained, and all will yet be well. Yes, your weary footsteps shall be safely guided through this rugged path. The way may be watered with your tears; but it is the way of his people, it is the way of the Lord. It is the path of conflict indeed; but it shall prove to you the path of victory, and its end shall be heaven.

With most of us there is a fearful prevalence of unbelief and spiritual sloth. The fire from heaven may have been kindled in our hearts, but it is smothered, and nearly extinguished, beneath the mass of sin and death which cleaves to us. It cannot warm our own souls; no wonder then we are unable to communicate light and warmth to others. Alas! how often do I feel it to be so with myself; and that I am dreadfully guilty, not only of preventing my own growth in grace, but of defrauding others of the improvement which they might, perhaps, derive from me, if my soul were in a right state; for who is the Christian so mean, so low, that may not communicate to others the flame of holy affection which is glowing in his own heart? And if afflictions may rouse us from this spiritual insensibility, shall we not willingly suffer?

August 3. Among the trials of my present situation, (which, blessed be God! is more pleasant than I ever expected it to be, in this world,) that of feeling myself continually liable to ungenerous remark, is one! My natural disposition is frank and affectionate. But I sometimes fear, lest the most innocent expressions of feeling, should be misconstrued, and the most innocent remarks, misapprehended. I always thought myself unusually exact, in my notions of female propriety. It is what I have respected myself for, or, perhaps more properly, been proud of. And there is a particular vexation in being the subject of remark to little minds, who are wholly unable to appreciate the principles by which persons of elevated and refined feelings are guided. But why all this uneasy and restless disturbance of my proud heart? Who am I, to expect an exemption from the common lot of the youthful widow? Help me, Lord, to avoid even the appearance of evil, and mourn over what is wrong, and quietly leave the rest to thee.

TO A FRIEND AT ANDOVER.

Bridgewater, August 26, 1822.

I have concluded to send my son to your academy. Maternal attachment pleaded hard in favor of retaining him in Boston, but judgment prevailed. I feel many new anxieties for him; and turning him abroad upon a world which lieth in wickedness, seems full of danger. But I am not his keeper; and, whether with me or from me, his only security is in the grace of Him who is able to deliver from temptation, to whom I gave him at his baptism, and endeavor in faith to commit him every day.

TO HER SON, AT PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER.

Boston, September 27, 1822.

My dear J.* You have been accustomed to come to me in all your difficulties, as your friend and adviser. What I have been to you, my son, I shall always be while I live. I wish you to write freely to me. Tell me what are your trials and enjoyments. Speak freely to me of your faults. And let me assure you, your heart will always be in the wrong, when you are unwilling to do this. Your case will be alarming indeed, if you ever yield to a disposition to conceal your faults. Mr. C.† is your friend. Never think him the less so, because he tells you your faults. It is the best possible proof he can give you of his love. What motive can he have for reproving you, but a desire to promote your welfare? Receive his counsels and admonitions then with gratitude. Remember, my dear boy, you were not sent to Andover to trifle. You were not created to trifle. You were made to act for the glory of God, and the good of mankind. Let your daily endeavor be, to live as one who must soon give account to God. Daily pray, Lead me not into temptation. And never do any thing which conscience tells you God does not approve. Farewell my child. The God of your fathers, bless and sanctify you.

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* The name of this son was originally Joseph Eckley, after the Rev. Dr. Eckley, with whom Mr. Huntington was settled colleague pastor of the Old South Church. After the death of her youngest child, Mrs. H. had the name of her surviving son changed, by legislative sanction, to Joshua.

† His guardian at Andover.

October 5. I have had, to night, a deep and solemn sense of the certainty and nearness of eternal things, more of a strengthening faith to perceive the substance and feel the evidence of things hoped for and unseen, than for a long time. The thick veil between my soul and heavenly objects, seemed somewhat removed, so that invisible realities were presented, with unusual clearness, to the view of my faith. Alas! I have lived the past summer, too much as the world live. My hopes and fears, desires and enjoyments, have been, in a great degree, earthly. But, oh my Savior! there is a faith which enters into that within the veil, and overcomes the world; which gives to the subjects of revelation, a reality and a certainty to the mind, that makes them effectual means of sanctification. I know it is so. Oh for such a faith! O for a broken heart, and a disposition to turn away from every earthly object that would keep me from thee.

TO HER SON, AT ANDOVER.

Boston, October 8, 1822

In the wicked world, with which you are now compelled to mingle to some extent, you will often hear wrong opinions advanced, and wrong actions vindicated. There are those who call evil good, and good evil, who put light for darkness, and darkness for light. I wish you to be aware of this, and to expect that you will often meet with persons of this description. And, if you will not be corrupted and ruined, you must have a principle of some sort that will enable you to encounter such temptations without injury. Now what is the principle that will enable you to do this? In the first place, *an enlightened conscience*, to enable you to distinguish the right from the wrong; and, in the next place, *firmness* or *stability*. You must judge for yourself, under a sense of your accountability to God; and then never, as you value your own peace of mind, do what you have decided that it is wrong to do. Depend upon it, a boy will always esteem you the more for a firm resistance of temptation, though he may laugh at you. Depend upon it, that independence which will hold you steadily in the right path, will ensure to you not only your own peace of mind, but the respect of others. But, after all, God must be your helper and keeper. The Psalmist prayed, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." And this has been the prayer of all good men ever since. Heaven grant it may be yours.

What have you gone to Andover for, my son? God knows, I think I may say, that, on my part, you were sent thither to fit you the better to be the Lord's. Yes, you have been given to God. I have, in your behalf, renounced every thing which might hinder your being entirely his. I have devoted you to the service of the Savior. I submit cheerfully to all the sacrifices connected with your separation from me, that you may prepare to stand upon the Lord's side, and be valiant for him on the earth. What say you to all this? Do you choose this service? Do you give yourself to God? Do you do this daily? Do you desire to manifest that you are on the side of Jesus Christ? My dear child, delay not to yield yourself up wholly to God. Be much in prayer, and in reading the Bible. Strive to enter in at the strait gate. God forbid that you should resist all the weighty obligations which bind you to his service, and make your way through them all, down the fearful road that is trodden only by his enemies, and which terminates in the endless horrors of the second death! My heart sickens at the thought. I would take you by the hand, and conduct you in the blessed way marked by the steps of all holy beings who have lived on earth, by apostles and prophets, and by the great High Priest of our profession, Jesus, the Son of God, who left us an example, that we should walk in his steps. It is a pleasant way, my dear J. The peace of God descends upon the traveller who pursues the blessed path. It is "the highway of holiness;" and to them who walk in it, God is a sun and shade, a defence and deliverance. He holds them in his hand. He guides them by his counsel. He receives them up to glory.

October 12. I have been begging to have my dross consumed, and my graces refined, to be filled with the spirit of Christ, to be clothed with humility, to be imbued with that spirit of benevolence which shall make me long and labor, in my poor measure, for the good of others, and neither demand nor desire any return.

I wish to live in a reasonable independence of this world; to take what my God gives me thankfully, and wish for nothing more. If I perceive attentions once shewn me withheld, not to be disturbed as one who has placed her happiness in these poor distinctions; and to hold myself ready to seize every favorable moment, which God presents to me, of doing good to those who are thus changed, from simple love to their souls, and to my dear Savior, whose example I would imitate. I think I do possess something of this blessed spirit. But I have not, of late, experienced so much annihilation of self, and felt so much as if God and his cause were all to me, as I think I have at some former periods. Oh, to pass through this world, as one whose hopes are on high; and, whatever subordinate objects I may lawfully desire, to have something better, something higher, something independent of all these things,—that something which every saint in heaven has, in whom the doing the will, and contemplating the perfections, and promoting the glory of Jehovah, enkindle a holy happiness of which the heart of man, in this lower world, cannot conceive! But a measure of it may be attained. And I pray God, not to let me find any rest in this world, which shall hinder me from resting in him. There cast I the anchor of my hope. Witness all Heaven! I would renounce every thing which would unsettle me from this hold. Amen, and amen.

TO A FRIEND AT N.

Boston, November 3, 1822.

There is scarcely any thing more affecting, or more calculated to inspire sympathy, than to behold a mind, evidently imbued with Christian feelings and influenced by Christian principles, struggling, and suffering, and sinking, under the pressure of mental despondency. We must all feel that we are not our own keepers, that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and that the causes which affect the animal spirits, are so subtle in their nature, and so complicated in their connexions, as to baffle the utmost stretch of human sagacity fully to understand them. This consideration ought to make us constantly humble, and excite us to more vigorous actings of faith upon Him who knoweth our frame, and is able to keep, or deliver, us from temptation. My dear husband used to say, that he believed "it was best for some Christians to be under a cloud, and that they grew in grace faster than they would in other circumstances." But it is a great privilege to go forward, in our pilgrimage through this world, under the clear shining of the Sun of righteousness. God's dealings with his people are very various; and it seems to me a great mistake, to suppose that those are always the best Christians who have the most comfort. The natural effect of a close walk with God, however, is, unless it be prevented by some counteracting cause, joy and peace, and the full assurance of hope unto the end.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW AT N. L.

Boston, November 10, 1822.

The depression of spirits of which you speak, may, there is no doubt, be, in most cases, traced immediately to some cause connected with that delicate and subtle part of our constitution, called the nervous system; but, primarily, it is from God. I do believe, that such a trial of ourselves, such an unsettling of all our strong holds, such a lesson of our extreme weakness and helplessness and poverty, is often attended with the most beneficial effects. It is indeed like being laid in the furnace; and we are ready to fear we shall be utterly consumed. Yet, our gracious God designs only to consume the dross. We are naturally inclined to indulge a spirit of pride and independence. Our mountain stands strong, and we think we shall never be moved. This unholy tendency of our nature must be checked. We can grow in grace, no farther than we learn to draw all our supplies from the Lord Jesus Christ. It is of His fullness that we must receive grace for grace. And how shall we be made to learn this? Why, by learning that we are poor, and weak, and blind, and naked; dependent on God, not only for the bounties of his grace and providence, but for every capacity necessary to our enjoyment or improvement of them. And how can we learn this better, than by being, for a season, left of God to our own darkness and helplessness? Who can so well know the blessedness of that hope which is an anchor to the soul, as the man who has felt himself in imminent hazard of being shipwrecked on the ocean of despair? Who can feel so deeply as he, the unfathomable riches of the grace which has redeemed him? Who can so fully understand the force of those infinite obligations, which bind him to be wholly the Lord's? It is, I think, a settled point, that whatever promotes our growth in grace is best for us. And I suppose we grow in grace, just in proportion as we live simply on Christ. Therefore, whatever most effectually humbles us, and keeps up in our souls a practical conviction of our constant dependence on him, is best for us, though the means may be of such a kind as, in our imperfect apprehension, may threaten us with destruction.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, November 17, 1822.

We are, I think, in danger of being deficient in patience, to bear, as we ought, with the faults of our children. 'What! no better? And this, after I have labored so long, and so painfully?' We forget that temptation and constitutional sins are often too much for ourselves, though our minds, we hope, are fortified by Christian principle, to the influence of which our children are yet strangers. We, in fact, expect our little ones to exhibit a faultlessness which we are far from exhibiting. We have not patience to wait for God to do his work in his own time and way. We want the labors, and the watchings, and the mournings and the disappointments, which attend maternal diligence, ended now, —to have our children made, without delay, by the immediate agency of the Spirit of God, just what we desire. And so we ought. But this desire should not be so inordinate, as to prevent our laboring without fainting, though God is pleased to withhold the blessing till the season of labor is over. "The seed may spring up," as one says, "after the hand that planted it, and the eye that watered it, are at rest in the grave." I have been greatly pleased with the extracts from the Pastoral Address of the General Association of Connecticut, on the religious education of baptized children, published in some of the late numbers of the Recorder. When we see our churches acting on the principles there recommended, we may hope for something better than we have ever yet seen; the children of the Church will indeed be a seed to serve the Lord.

I am reading an excellent work, Owen on Communion with God. It is full of sweet thoughts; and, though the style and method are sometimes rather obscure, it seems to give one a deeper insight into this delightful subject than any thing I have ever read. Owen usually went to the bottom in pursuing his religious investigations. It appears to me that a thorough acquaintance with one such work as this, would do more towards strengthening the intellect, and giving a proper direction and balance to the religious feelings, than running over the contents of our Magazines, &c. for a year. I was much interested, however, (for I do not mean to speak against Magazines, but to keep them in their proper place,) in a piece in the last Christian Spectator on the present literary and religious taste of the Christian world. The writer thinks the Waverly Novels are having a deteriorating influence on the reading of Christians; introducing among them a class of books which has generally been considered inadmissible, and thus breaking down, in this respect, the boundary between the Church and the world.* There is, unquestionably much truth in these remarks. These novels, that is the very few I have seen, if they are distinguished by the absence of what is impure and digusting, if the scenes they describe are not marked by all the extravagances of the old romance, if they do exhibit some masterly touches of character, are, notwithstanding, far from being calculated to exert an influence on the reader favorable, on the whole, to his mental and moral improvement. At least it appears so to me.

December 1. I have prevailingly felt more weanedness from the world, and more singleness of heart toward God, for the last two months, than for some time before. I seem to be desiring and looking for nothing, comparatively, but to stand in my lot, and be faithful in it, till my redemption is accomplished. I have, indeed, been a good deal troubled about temporal things. So foolish am I and ignorant. Yet there have been granted me some sweet manifestations from Him who is the light and life, the rock and refuge, of my soul, which have made me ashamed of myself, and filled me with hope and joy.

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* See Christian Spectator, Vol. iv. p. 561. Some judicious remarks on the same subject, may also be seen in Vol. vii. p. 80.

TO A FRIEND IN A.

Boston, December 2, 1822.

It is a settled principle with me, never to doubt the love of old friends, unless I have some evidence which compels me to do so. And in your case, my dear E., it would require something far more unequivocal than a silence much longer than the last. Writing, however, like almost every thing else, becomes pleasant or painful, by habit. And, though married ladies should never neglect more necessary duties for it, and, of course, cannot be expected to practise it as much as others, I think they should exert themselves not to neglect it altogether. It is an innocent source of enjoyment. It has a tendency, moreover, to turn off the current of the thoughts and affections from the usual track, which is an advantage, as there can be no doubt that a happy domestic connexion is liable to become the occasion of an exclusiveness of interest and affection, very unfavorable to the expansion of the intellectual powers, and of the benevolent feelings.

Never, my beloved friend, apologise for speaking so much to me of your children. What subject can be so interesting to a parent? And whatever relates to your little ones, is peculiarly a matter of interest to me. You ask my opinion, and I give it, because I love you and them. But I daily feel the need of being instructed myself.

In regard to *visiting*, I have considered it, especially at an early age, a great disadvantage. Nothing can be done in managing children, without regularity. Habits are of the utmost importance; and it is impossible to establish habits, (unless they be bad ones, which will form and strengthen in any circumstances,) if children are much from home. There are few persons who will regulate your child, in any particular as you would yourself. The best will not be as watchful what impressions she receives, what dispositions she manifests, and what liberties she takes. Nor is this all. It is scarcely possible, if she visits much, to prevent her being under an influence, in some respects and in a greater or less degree, adverse to much that you may do for her at home. Vanity will be flattered, or selfishness strengthened, or impatience and perverseness indulged.—As children grow older, I think it is an advantage for them to visit occasionally. It improves their manners, and gives them the habit of depending a little on themselves. You perceive I refer to their visiting without their parents. There is more difficulty in making children contented at home, if they form a taste for going abroad; the formation of such a taste should, therefore, be avoided. Has not E. a little sister, large enough to play with? I like a baby house for little girls; all that some sensible people have said to the contrary, notwithstanding. They may have a closet, or part of one, entirely to themselves, and the arrangement and order of it be entrusted to their care. If they are required to keep it tidy and neat, it will be employment and amusement for them. As soon as children are old enough to understand what they read, the difficulty of amusing them lessens. And I think it is desirable to accustom them, as soon as may be, to assist in doing what they can, that they may learn the pleasure of being useful. To fold up the baby's cradle clothes, or pick up the threads on the carpet, or any thing else, however trivial, is something important for a child to do, if it inspires the love of industry, and makes her experience the happiness of doing good.

TO A FRIEND IN B.

Boston, December 5, 1822.

You my dear H., have had the other world brought near to you by sickness. How did it seem? I have had it brought near to me by affliction; and the thought of being with Christ is, generally, very refreshing to me. But you know the constitutional timidity of my nature. This causes me, sometimes, to fear, that, in that awful hour in which I shall be called to enter the dark valley, the weakness of my faith, or the overwhelming remembrance of past transgression, or the temptations of the accuser of the brethren, or all these together, may prevail to unsettle my hold on Christ, the only bulwark against perdition, and plunge me into a darkness which may be felt. I have a mind much disposed to this. When faith is not in exercise *now*, all seems to be gone. In severe sickness, I should think, there would often be such a depression of all the faculties, as to prevent their being distinctly, if not to prevent their being rationally, exercised upon any subject. A naked trust in the Savior of sinners would then be indispensable. Nothing else, surely, could uphold the spirit in her passage through these deep waters.

TO A FRIEND IN ANDOVER.

Boston, January 5, 1823.

Thank you, my dear —, for your note, and for the pleasing intelligence that several of the students in the Academy appear to be deeply impressed with the reality and importance of eternal things. That God is striving with them by his Spirit, is cause for abundant gratitude and thanksgiving. That the anxiety thus produced may wear away without a change of character, is a consideration furnishing strong reason why that gratitude and thanksgiving should be mingled with deep humiliation and godly fear. Yet, blessed be God, such impressions, though not immediately issuing in conversion, often repeated, while the process of God's mercy in preparing the heart for his effectual calling, is gradually going forward, is, I believe, a frequent mode in which the divine mercy is manifested and extended, especially to the children of believers. But when this is not the case, such impressions generally leave *them* harder and worse than they do other persons, on account of the greater light resisted.

As to my dear boy, I think the Lord knows that I have given him to Him. If I have ever performed any religious duty, I have done this, making no conditions as to circumstances, ways, means, services, or any of these things. My prevailing belief, and my comforting expectation is, that God, who has himself put these desires into my heart, will accept of what he has enabled and constrained me to do. As to *desert*, when I cast my eyes there, all is darkness and hopelessness. But "the *gift* of God is eternal life" to all who will accept it; and this free gift, which is offered, not only without recompense, but against unmingled ill-desert, this gift I think I have taken as my portion, and the portion of mine, forever, above, and so far as God pleases, against, every thing beside.

Of the pleasing state of things here, in a religious point of view, you have, doubtless, heard. The Lord does seem indeed, to be about to revive his work. The number of inquirers in our society has very much increased, and many of them appear to be deeply in earnest in seeking the salvation of their souls. There is also, more than usual attention to religion in the Park Street, and Essex Street, congregations. Meetings are highly interesting,—unusually full and solemn. Many, especially of the young, are turning their faces towards Zion. Rejoice with us, and pray for us.

TO HER SON AT ANDOVER.

Boston, January 13, 1823.

My dear J. The imagination that religion will make them unhappy, is one of the most common, and one of the most successful, temptations which the adversary of souls employs with people, especially with the young, to induce them to delay, and delay, the business of attending to their salvation, till it is too late to attend to it at all. One of the first religious exercises I remember, (I was not more than three years old,) was a solemn consultation in my mind, whether it was best to become a Christian then or not. If I did not, I thought I was in a dangerous state. But then if I did,—why, I should never have any more comfort in this world. I must never laugh, never play, never enjoy myself; but be always solemn, and dull, and gloomy. The result was, that I concluded it not best to be a Christian yet. But, blessed be God! he pursued me with his grace, as I humbly hope, so that I found there could be no happiness, no comfort, while God and I were enemies. He broke up the enchantment of Satan, and showed me, that these dreams, and plans of earthly delight, were all false and fatal, and held up to me by the enemy of my soul to cheat me to perdition.

What pleasures will religion deprive you of my son? May you not play just as innocently, and with more satisfaction, with religion, than without it? Depend upon it, religion will not debar you from any reasonable and lawful pleasure. All that it forbids you is sin. And do you wish for a license to sin comfortably? God forbid. Every Christian will tell you, that the law of God, which it is his delight to obey, leaves open to him the enjoyment of all those innocent comforts, connected with our situation in this world, as men, which his own mercy has so amply provided for us, and provided, that they may be used. You have known me long, my J., and been more capable of observing me since your dear father's death. Does religion deprive me of any pleasures? Does it diminish my enjoyment? No; my dear child. To the honor and glory of my blessed Lord, let me tell you, it was this which held up my soul, when passing through the deep waters, where there was no standing; which enabled me to rejoice in God, and to feel that, although my earthly prospects were shrouded in darkness, all was safe, all was well; which has enabled me, sometimes, to feel, that, though the whole creation were shivered to atoms, and mingled together in one universal wreck, I should still find all to be safe and well. I have given you to God, and I do so every day. You must, my dear boy, be his servant; and you shall find his service perfect freedom.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, January 18, 1823.

My beloved child. You have scarcely been out of my mind to-day. I have had great sorrow, and continual heaviness of heart, lest the present season of special mercy to the Academy should pass away, and you remain out of Christ. I have had more earnest wrestlings of spirit for you of late, than ever before. God encourages me to wait upon him, with crying and many tears for you, my son. He encourages me to desire great things, and to hope great things. Oh, that this may prove to you the accepted time, and the day of salvation!

Do you ask me, what you must do? I answer, give yourself to Christ. Make a solemn resolution, to reject all offers of comfort which this world holds out to you, till you obtain evidence that you have done this. Resolve to take no rest, no peace, till you have given yourself to Christ. Depend upon it, he will receive you. He says, "Him that cometh unto me: I will in no wise cast out." He will forgive you; he will wash away the pollutions and defilements of sin; he will make you a saint and a son.

You are descended, my dear J., from a long line of ancestors, on both sides, who were pious, and have finished their course, and gone to their gracious reward. Your dear father early declared himself for Christ. Your unworthy mother was early, as she hopes, brought to devote herself to Christ. On which side will you be, that of God, or of Satan and the world? "Choose you, this day, whom you will serve." If the Lord is to be your God, then follow him. If the world,—but no, I cannot make such a supposition. You are the Lord's. His vows are upon you. You must not go back. Turn your face full toward Zion. Keep that light in view. Let your face be always towards heaven. In all your strugglings, struggle to get nearer and nearer to the gate of the heavenly city. Run, and you shall obtain. God help you to do so, and you are blessed forever. Amen, and amen.

TO A FRIEND IN W.

Boston, January 19, 1823.

To speak of one's children is much the same thing as to speak of one's self; and to say "I have a sensible," or "an amiable," or "an interesting child," carries with it all the repulsiveness of self-commendation. There are, moreover, few persons, comparatively, who have benevolence enough, to hear such a frank declaration of the virtuous dispositions and desires which we are conscious of, or which we know to exist in our children, as circumstances may sometimes perfectly justify, without making a bad use of it. I have been grieved and shocked, at the exhibitions of character I have sometimes met with in regard to this thing. Perhaps the sentiments of the parent respecting her child, have been dexterously elicited by a shew of affection and interest; and the remarks, made in humility and in confidence, have been the occasion of much ungenerous animadversion upon the character of the child, and oftener still on the management of the parent. If you have never seen any thing of this sort, you have been peculiarly fortunate. A judicious parent may see the faults of her own children, much more distinctly than she can possibly see those of other children. And to conclude that a parent does not, or cannot, see the faults of her child, because she does not speak of them, is, to say the least, very bad reasoning. I suppose it is best, ordinarily, not to speak much of our own faults, or virtues, nor of the faults or virtues of our children, or our friends, unless some good is, on the whole, likely to result from it.

As to the question you ask, respecting private instruction, and attending school, I do not feel perfectly qualified to answer you, as I have not had experience of both. I think, however, there are disadvantages attending each method. There is certainly great hazard in turning out an unformed and comparatively innocent young creature, to mingle with the indiscriminate mass of children who usually attend school. Every parent who has sent his children to school, must have perceived the alteration which appears in them upon first taking this step. At least it must be very common. It is certain that, in itself, the influence of such a mixture must be bad, and this bad influence will be in proportion to the degree of immorality in the scholars. But then there are disadvantages in being educated at home. Unless the mother has uncommon health, the confinement it will occasion her, will be very injurious to her constitution; and unless her talent for government is peculiarly excellent, the perpetual recurrence of occasions in which it is necessary for her to exert authority, will be likely gradually to weaken the habit of obedience, and the sense of obligation in the children. Children educated at home, are apt to fall into desultory habits. The tediousness of study, unassisted and unenlivened by any excitement resulting from companionship, must be felt to be great. I suppose the mind expands, much in proportion to the degree in which it is acted upon by the objects about it, and the circumstances in which it is placed. If this be true, though the character of a child nurtured by itself, may be more free from faults than that of another accustomed to associates, it may also be less marked with strong and striking virtues. If there is not so much to censure, there may be less to approve. Upon the whole, much depends upon the character of the child, and very much upon the character of the school to which it is proposed to send him. I have no doubt that some children do a great deal better to attend a good school than they would to be instructed at home.

TO MRS. S. AT BRIDGEWATER.

Boston, February 23, 1823.

My dear Mrs. S. I wish I was where I could look in upon you for a few moments, as I did last summer. Your pleasant chamber, and its lonely and sorrowful occupant, are not forgotten. Lonely and sorrowful, I know you must be. A summer's sun has long since dried the green sod which covers the grave of Mary, and a winter's snows have been settling on and hiding the place where she sleeps; but your tears are not dried, your grief cannot be suppressed. Alas! I know it is so; and the gloomy and desolate face of nature at this season, speaks, in language which goes to your very soul, of all you have loved, and have lost. Miserable indeed are human comforters. I cannot tell you not to mourn. I cannot tell you your loss is common; for where will you find another daughter, another Mary. till you meet her in heaven? She was, in a sense, your all; and she is not, for God hath taken her.

Perhaps to write in this strain, is not wise. If it has given you pain, forgive me. Yet there is something in this train of thought that is pleasing. If it occasions grief, it seems like "the joy of grief." The heart, sometimes, loves to give itself up to a sense of its own desolation; and, while it dwells on the remembrance of what it once so tenderly loved, cherishes every fond recollection, and desires to cherish it forever. If our friends are not here, where are they? If in all this wide world we shall never meet again, if we cast our look forward, and behold nothing but the fearful chasm we shudder to contemplate,—the chasm opened by the loss of these dear ones, and opened never to be filled, is all lost? No, they are not lost, but only taken over into the world of spirits a little before us. We are on the threshold. A few more summers and winters, perhaps a few more months or days only, and we shall follow them. The great concern then is, to be faithful. We must not expect heaven here. Our great business in this world is, to do and suffer, all our Lord's will, as good and loyal subjects, as loving and obedient children. Rest is no where promised on earth. "Be thou faithful *unto death*, and I will give thee a crown of life." "The presumptuous," says one, "expect great success here, and heaven hereafter."

TO A FRIEND IN B.

Boston, February 26, 1823.

I might tell you much about my own stupidity. In general, however, these complaints are not useful. As there is neither merit or humility in being in a dead, carnal state, there certainly can be none in our saying we are in such a state. Neither does our talking about our barrenness, &c., make us any better. And I have sometimes thought, we encourage each other in a feeble and stinted growth in grace, by a mutual disclosure of sins and short-comings, which leaves the impression that we are pretty much like other Christians. Bold and forward professions are always suspicious; yet, in ordinary cases, if the Christian is in the lively exercise of grace, he will be likely to have the peace and comfort of such a state, and such an humble conviction, resulting from tried evidence, that he actually is in that state, as will remove distressing doubt.

Sin always clouds our evidences. It must be so. But it is not sin felt and resisted, but sin trifled with, sin allowed, encouraged, that spreads the gloom of spiritual despondency over our souls. There are those who have no experimental knowledge of the evil of sin, or of its existence in their hearts, and yet think they are Christians. These may habitually have an assurance of hope. But how utterly worthless is it? Yet, I believe there is an humble "quietness and assurance" which rests on another foundation;—which, while it is accompanied with the deepest sense of sin, is able to appeal to God, that all sin is hated and resisted; and which looks away to Him, whose blood cleanseth, with full confidence in his mercy.

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. Y.

Boston, March 9, 1823.

Acute pain, I have often thought, occasions less prostration of mind, than extreme weakness without much pain.

In the one case, suffering seems to rouse the mind to action,—the action felt to be necessary to meet a positive and distinctly apprehended evil ; in the other, the mind seems left without excitements, to sink into a listlessness bordering upon inanity. There is great resignation in being willing, from a regard to the will of God which has made it necessary, to feel ourselves good for nothing, without even that sense of heroism, which sometimes attends what we consider suffering with magnanimity. And, whatever the world may think of it, this humble, quiet, child-like willingness to submit ourselves entirely to the will of God, to feel that we are poor, and weak, and worthless, and not worthy of the Master's use, is a grace of the highest price in the eyes of Him who seeth not as man seeth.

The animal spirits are very apt to sink when the body has been long enfeebled. And then the soul is apt to get into darkness, because the spirits have sunk. It is commonly regarded as an unfavorable sign, when sickness renders the soul less comfortable. But the natural effect of sickness is, certainly, to depress the feelings; and in this there is no moral evil. It is the necessary consequence of the connexion which exists between our bodies and souls. God does indeed, by the special communications of his grace, often, perhaps usually, in the case of his children, counteract this tendency; but not always. No doubt he sometimes sees it best for the Christian, and absolutely necessary to his self-acquaintance and effectual humiliation to leave him without the comforting influences of his grace, and the sweet consciousness of his love, which would cause him to rejoice in the midst of sorrow. B t the Lord, certainly, knows best what to do with us ; and it is the office of faith to trust him at all times,—to trust him when our frame is languid, and our comforts few, as well as when our health is vigorous, and our consolations abound. Nothing should hinder our trusting in him, and hoping in his mercy. Faith has respect to Christ as the only ground of our acceptance with God, and, so far as it is in exercise, looks away from all that is in the soul, or ever has been, or ever can be, as having any thing to do, as a meritorious cause, in the matter of justification. Does Satan plead against us—sin, and darkness, and doubt, backsliding, rebellion, and treachery to our own souls? Faith answers, True, all true; I am a sinner; and on this broad ground, I am warranted to go to that Savior who died for sinners, and who has said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth."

TO HER SON AT ANDOVER.

Boston, March 9, 1823.

Young people are apt to imbibe wrong notions on religious subjects. For instance, if there is not as much attention to religion in the Academy now, as there was last term, perhaps you may be thinking you are not as pressingly obligated to seek the salvation of your soul now, as then. This is wrong. What difference can it make in your duty, whether any other person is seeking Christ or not? What is that to you? Are you not bound to love God, and yield yourself to his service? Is not this the end for which you were created? Would it cease to be your duty, if in all this wide world you could not find one solitary Christian? Certainly not. It is therefore, as urgent a duty, for you to give yourself to God this term, as it was the last: yea, it is even more urgent than it was then.

Since I began this letter, Mr. D. has called, and communicated to me the affecting intelligence of the death of Mrs. C.* But who could wish her back in this world of sin and sorrow, if her work was finished, and she has gone to Him, who went to heaven, after he had finished his work, to prepare places for all who love him? This is another solemn call to you, my son. Listen to the still small voice, which speaks to you from the world of spirits, 'Be thou also ready.' Look at the grave of her who was so lately with you; and remember you must soon follow. Think of your father, cut off in the very midst of his days. Think of that sweet, sweet brother, how like a flower he sprung up, and put forth the early blossoms of beauty and intelligence; alas! soon to be withered, and smitten by the hand of death. Beloved child! removed, as I humbly trust, from this rough and dangerous world, to a state of eternal safety, before bitter experience had taught him his danger or his weakness! Think of them my J.,—and let the thought inspire you with a holy resolution, to set your feet on every obstacle which lies in your way to the heaven whither they have gone. Think of them,—and rouse yourself up to be a diligent and faithful follower of those who, through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Yes, my beloved child, I hope to meet you in heaven. Were it not for this hope, my days would be bitter and comfortless days, and I should soon go down to the grave in sorrow.

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*The lady with whom Mrs. Huntington's son boarded.

TO THE SAME.

Boston, March 23, 1823.

I wish you to cultivate feelings of kindness towards your schoolmates. Be not over vigilant to detect the shades and weaknesses in their characters. All are imperfect; and you should extend to others the same forbearance you expect from them. Sin, I never wish you to palliate, or excuse, either in yourself or in others. Yet there are little vexatious qualities in some people, which, though not, perhaps, positively sinful, are very uncomfortable and troublesome to those who come in contact with them. These little things you should try to overlook. And you should not judge too severely those who do things, sometimes, which are really wrong. If the settled habits of a boy are wrong, I desire you not to excuse his faults. But you may still entertain feelings of benevolence towards him. Remember that others have much to overlook in you. Be kind, be obliging, be forgiving, even as you hope for forgiveness from God. But when urged to do what you know to be wrong, be firm, resolute, decided. While you choose only the best boys for your companions, labor after the exercise of those Christian feelings which shall cause you to wish well to the worst.

The account you give me of ——, and some others, is very painful. But it has always been so. There will be stony-ground hearers, and other hearers, upon whom the people of God bestow labor in vain. Yet this no more proves that all are unfruitful, than a cloudy day proves that there is no sun. Oh, it is heart rending to see poor sinners turning back to this world, which is passing away, and will soon be destroyed, after they have appeared to set out in earnest to seek something better! My dear J., I earnestly long to have you become a Christian indeed. God calls to you, "My son, give me thine heart." Will you, oh, will you not comply?

TO A FRIEND AT M.

Boston, April 27, 1823.

Dr. ——— preached for us to-day, from Rom. v. 1. "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1. What is meant by being justified. 2. How the sinner can be justified. 3. The nature of the faith which justifies. 4. The evidences of being justified. His exhortations and appeals at the close of his sermon, especially to those who are expecting to be justified in some way different from that which God has appointed, were convincing and powerful. Yet some are offended at this plain dealing! This is, however, to be expected. The peculiarities of the Gospel will be met, with all the opposition, and all the objections, of inveterate aversion and determined hostility from the men of the world. The offence of the cross, were the doctrines of the cross more fully insisted on, would appear to be no mere dream of the enthusiast. But any thing is better than death, and to see people offended at the *truth*, is less discouraging than to see them, under its faithful exhibition, feel nothing at all. The dismal quietness of spiritual slumber must be broken. People must be convinced that the peace they have so long and so complacently rested in is the peace of ignorance, of apathy, and of destructive indifference to every thing peculiarly Christian. And I do believe that a work of grace is begun here, the blessed effects of which will be felt to future generations. God is in the midst of us, and I feel confident that the sun of a better day is dawning upon us. Can we not: my dear friend, both say, 'Amen: come, Lord Jesus, come quickly? Though others may regard all this as weakness and folly, we hail the coming of thy kingdom as an event more illustrious than the march of earthly conquerors; as an event, whose effects, in greatness and glory, will soon cause all that is splendid, and all that is imposing, in the records of human might, to go out in total darkness?'

The world has a standard of its own in determining the merit and the worth of things. But it is a false standard; a standard which the Bible meets, at every turn, with unvarying and unyielding condemnation. Now, to live in this world, and to keep up tolerable appearances with the world, and yet hold up constantly, a standard directly opposite to theirs, and one which they regard as contemptible, is very difficult. We can see, indeed, how it happens that they view things just as they do. Perhaps we remember the time when it was so with us. This ought to be enough for us, that we know they are in the wrong. But it is hard to be despised. And this makes one of the striking peculiarities of the Gospel. "Whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." Yet, on the other hand, no Christian ever gains any thing by making unchristian concessions to the world. He cannot go all lengths with it, if he is a Christian; and the state of vascillation, which keeps one vibrating between both worlds is always distressing and contemptible. There is common sense enough in the world to make it respect consistency, even though that consistency is maintained against it. And my friend, the only way of entering into rest is, to believe all that God has revealed, and regulate all our desires and actions by our belief. The stronger our faith, the more we are advanced in the knowledge of spiritual things, the less we shall be troubled at the little crosses and mortifications our adherence to our Master costs us. The more we learn to look away from the things seen and temporal, to those which are not seen and eternal, the happier we shall be, partly because we shall be less affected by human opinion. It is melancholy to think how little any of us honor God. "Man's chief end is to glorify God." This is the business of the angels; and it should be our business as much as theirs. It is an excellent, an ennobling thing to be thus employed. And if we are Christians, we shall mourn much over our own sins, and over the sins of God's people, *because they dishonor him.*

TO A FRIEND AT B.

Boston, May 18, 1823.

I felt disappointed at not seeing you again when in town, my dear H., but could not. My residence is so far from the centre of the city, that the necessary business I have to do there, takes so much time, that I am obliged to make fewer calls than would be agreeable to me. Besides, my engagements have been unusually numerous this spring. Almost since the commencement of the precious revival with which heaven is blessing us, the female members of our church in my neighborhood, have had a prayer meeting of half an hour, three times a week, at each other's houses. Besides this the neighborhood meeting, for this quarter of the city, which, you know, is intended chiefly for those who are not professors, has, since its establishment, been held every third time at my house. These meetings I have felt it my duty generally to attend,—the prayer meetings always, when it was in my power. Not that I think the habit of attending many extra meetings correct, as a general thing. But there are special seasons, which call for special exertions, on the part of ministers, and of private Christians. Such a season we have been, for some time, and are still, favored with. There are those, moreover, (and of these in my present circumstances, I consider myself one,) whose comparative exemption from domestic responsibilities, lays them under obligations to the public, which they ought to understand and discharge. Every Christian ought to do something. To lie by as drones, is a sad, a wicked thing. Yet no one Christian is called to do every thing. God seems sometimes to assign to us our portion of employment, and point out to us the place of labor. Indeed he always does this, if we had wisdom and faith to see it; but in some cases the sphere appears rather less of our own choosing than in others. For instance, a mother, whom God has set over a family, to whom she must be faithful as one who is to give account; if her family is large, and her assistance small, and her health not vigorous, who would undertake to say that she should leave this sphere which God has assigned her, to labor in some other? And it appears to me that we lose by attempting too much. No one should undertake to do more than he can do well. The hurry and confusion of mind which result from imperfectly carrying on a great many different plans, all good plans perhaps, is a state greatly to be dreaded. To feel in such a hurry and tumult, as not to be able to pray in the closet without distraction, is dreadful. And such a state is entirely blame-worthy, let the causes which produced it be what they may. It is a happy thing when we are willing to do all we can, and when we are able to determine accurately how much we can do.

TO HER SON, AT ANDOVER.

Boston, June 8, 1823.

My anxieties about you, my dear J., are very great. I wish to have you in earnest in the pursuit of human science; but I am, above all, solicitous to have you in earnest in the pursuit of holiness, without which human science will soon be found to be as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Let it be your first, your great concern, to be a Christian. I hope you will choose those boys for your associates who are most serious. I wish you regularly and punctually to attend the Bible class, and to be careful to be always well prepared for the exercise, and to remember the instructions you there receive. Daily read your Bible in your retirement, with seriousness and attention, to see what God says to *you;* and pray for his grace to help you to understand and feel its precious truths. Never neglect secret prayer. You cannot expect to be kept from sin and temptation without the help of God. You are weak and depraved, and in a world of temptation and danger. Your only hope is in His arm who is able to save you even to the uttermost. Be not slothful in business, but diligent in duty; for you are soon to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and give an account for your talents, your time, your opportunities for improvement, all your conduct, words, and thoughts. Oh, remember this, and live so that you may hope to hear the Judge say to you, 'Come thou blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for thee, from the foundation of the world.'

TO A SISTER-IN-LAW, AT N. L.,

Boston, June 11, 1823.

I am sorry, my dear sister, to hear that you are not well. My own health has been rather more feeble than usual this spring. A troublesome cough has been my companion longer than I like. We dwell in houses of clay; and the earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolving. We have admonitions in every form, to be doing with our might the work assigned us. And it is a great work, to prepare ourselves, and do what we can to prepare others, for eternity. The opportunity of exerting a salutary influence on those about us, will soon be over. Soon, very soon, it will be too late to labor and pray. The Lord help us to be faithful, as those who are speedily to give account.

Give my love to our dear mother. Tell her, I hope she has found shelter in His bosom who is a very present help in every time of trouble; that she is enabled to roll over her burdens on His arm, who chasteneth whom he loveth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth, that she has found, by experience, that the name of the Lord is a strong tower, into which she can run, and be safe. I do hope, my dear sister, that the Lord Jesus has prepared places for us in a better world than this; and that when he cometh, he will receive us to himself, according to his own word, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." Let us comfort one another with these words.

TO HER SON AT ANDOVER.

Boston, June 22, 1823.

I have thought a great deal of you, my dear J., since you left us at the commencement of the present term. You are removed from my immediate care, and your actions cannot now pass under my observation with the same minuteness which they used to do. I may, indeed, learn, in general, from others, what shape your character is taking; but all those various details of action—small, but unceasingly exhibited—which I used to watch so closely, can no longer be inspected by your mother. You now, much more than formerly, must act for yourself. Sometimes the thought that it is so, is extremely painful to me. But then I reflect, that the only bulwark against temptation is the correctness and strength of your own principles; and I feel that I must pray for you, and leave you with God. The boy whose evil propensities are only held in by the reins of parental vigilance, will easily fall a prey to the snares of a treacherous world and a sagacious enemy, as soon as these salutary restraints are removed. You must be able yourself, my son, to discern the difference between the right and the wrong; and you must have a heart to choose the former and refuse the latter, or your mother's prayers and instructions will never save you.

While I wish you, as I have often intimated, to be careful in forming friendships, becoming intimate with none but boys of unexceptionable character, I am equally desirous that you should avoid feeling that you are very good yourself. "To this man will I look," saith God, "even to him who is of an humble and contrite heart." God "resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." And I wish you not to speak of the faults of other boys unnecessarily. This is very wrong. If they are not good, you need not be intimate with them; you ought not to be, because God commands you "not to go in the way of sinners." But this does not imply that you should talk about their failings. You should strive not to make enemies. If there is any temper which I love to see above all others, it is the humble, lamb-like spirit which Jesus Christ possessed in perfection, and which his Gospel requires of all who would be his disciples. Take your place at his feet, my J., and learn of him, as Mary did.

TO MRS. WINSLOW, IN CEYLON.

Boston, June 22, 1823.

My dear friend. At a very short notice I am called upon to write to you, and to have my letter ready to-morrow. I take up my pen with reluctance, because I do not feel as if the state of my heart is a fit one in which to write to a Missionary. I know it ought to be in a suitable frame for such a service at all times; but, alas!—do you, on missionary ground, having literally left father and mother for Christ, having willingly suffered the loss of all things to finish the work assigned you, do you ever know what it is to feel the absence, almost, of Christian feelings, and Christian consolations? Or, are your hearts always like a flame of fire, in the service of your Master? do you continually receive of his fulness, and grace for grace? and does the sense of his love and of his presence, always cheer and animate your spirits, under the sacrifices and self-denials you suffer for his sake? Oh, I suppose not! I suppose every human heart is liable to wander, and to be punished for its wanderings; and that this actually is the case, in some degree, with all who are in the flesh. Yet I should think the Christian Missionary must be better than other Christians. We are all, under God, what our circumstances make us. Fond of our ease, we rest supinely in this world of darkness and distance from God, unless roused to exertion by the pressure of outward circumstances. If we cannot live without constant supplies and supports from the fountain of grace, we are driven to a close walk with God. Would Brainerd, Martyn, and others, have been what they were, if they could have set down quietly in this world? It is true, the first impulse which directed them to a missionary life was independent of this cause, and probably the result of a strong principle of piety. Yet probably neither of them anticipated all the sorrows and privations which awaited them and which were destined to exalt and consummate their graces, and to throw around their characters a splendor of Christian heroism, which reflects more honor on the Gospel, than the lives of an hundred ordinary Christians. Some are so distinguished; and blessed are they who are able to be baptized with this baptism. Yes, blessed are they. And when the lustre of all earthly greatness is put out in eternal darkness, then shall all created intelligences acknowledge them to be truly blessed, and truly great.

And how are you now, my dear friends? We rejoice in the encouragements which you meet with. Your little churches, planted in the midst of those miserable and benighted heathens, are like spots of the moon-beam through the dismal blackness of a cloudy midnight. Yet faint not; the lucid specks shall shine brighter and clearer, the shadows of night shall disappear, for God has promised unto the Son, the *heathen* for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. And hath he said it, and will he not do it? Hath he promised, and will he not perform? Go on then in the strength of the Lord of Hosts. You shall reap if you faint not, and in *due season*. God will convert the heathen by you, just as fast as will be most for his glory. Perhaps you will think that he does not do it fast enough. But remember he knows best. Sometimes it takes a great while to break up the fallow ground. And while men deem those the best laborers who raise the largest crop, the great Lord of the vineyard may see, in the patient and self-denying efforts of the man who spent all his life in clearing away the rubbish, and preparing the soil, and dropping the seed, (to spring up "after the hand that sowed it, and the eye that wept over it, are at rest in the grave,") more of the simplicity of faith, and the fervor of love, and the earnestness of zeal, and the patience of hope, than in him who gathers in the sheaves. But it is best to be pleased with laboring just how, and where, the Lord chooses. That is the best place, and those are the best circumstances which He appoints. If he keeps us laboring all the days of our lives, and does not see fit to let us see much success, that is nothing to us. He will take care of results. Let us do our duty, and trust him with all the rest. My dear friends, we believe the Lord will bless you, and bless your labors more and more. How much has he done in Bengal? Compare India with what it was fifty years ago. And probably Christianity will increase in a progressive ratio,—in the ordinary course of events, I mean, and without any special interference.

I have desired some, I hope, though not so much as I ought, that God would *baptize all your missionary stations with his Holy Spirit.* Oh what a happy thing it would be, for him to distil the dews of his grace on all the children, and other heathen, who belong to you! He is pouring out his Spirit here, and I hope we do sometimes feel strongly that He will thus come to you, and inscribe salvation on your walls, and on your gates praise; that He will put a new song into your mouths, and into those of the "babes and sucklings" among you.—Kiss your own dear little boy for me: and do not be afraid to give him up to Jesus Christ. Your Master knows all the privations and evils of his situation, and He is able to make them all up to him. This must be a trial. I think I can realize it. But there is no trial for which provision is not made in the Covenant of Grace. Depend upon it, you shall not be losers in that which would touch you the nearest, for any sacrifices which you have made for Christ. The promises of God to the seed of his people are very explicit and direct. If any one can take hold of them, the Christian Missionary can. Upon the whole, all you want, is to be strong in the grace which there is in Christ Jesus. "He that believeth shall not be ashamed."

I do not know whether I have written to you since the death of my children. It is nearly two years since the Lord took them. One was my little infirm child. The other my sweet Joshua, born to me after the death of his dear father. They died within ten days of each other; and, I fully believe, have gone to be with Christ I had given them up to him to be his servants, without making any conditions as to place. I trust they are serving him in heaven.

TO A FRIEND AT A.

Boston, June 24, 1823.

I write, just to inform you, that I think of going to Connecticut. I have had a bad cough, at intervals, all the spring. It is troublesome and obstinate. Dr. —— says I must change the air. He recommends going into the interior, but thinks a visit to New-Haven or New-London, would answer the purpose. When I shall set out, I am not able, at present, to inform you. I will write you more definitely soon.

TO MRS. S., AT NEW-LONDON.

Boston, June 29, 1823.

I wish I could look in upon you and your little charge this evening ; I should then know, better than I now do, how to address you. I will, however, take it for granted that you are well, that the children are well, that your journey has been comfortable, and that you are comparatively happy.

You and I, my dear madam, have seen many changes, we have met with many vicissitudes, every one of which the Lord chose out for us, in infinite wisdom and mercy, before the world was. And has he not helped us hitherto? Has he not always delivered us from evil, or enabled us to bear it? And is not his grace in times past, a pledge of future mercy?

Upon the whole, my dear Mrs. S., I believe all that we want is more grace; a heart to rest in God; a heart to love his character, to love his will, to love his government.

This would set all right. All that we have is his,—our own bodies and souls, our children, our possessions, our acquirements. Is it not so? Are we Christians? And are we grasping any darling object, and saying, 'All the rest, Lord, but not this; this I cannot part with?' Oh, are we Christians; and shall we do this? No, no. Let it be our glory, let it be our happiness, to GIVE UP ALL TO GOD; and we shall be repaid a thousand fold.

The letter just read, was the last written by this excellent woman, previously to her being seized with the malady which terminated in her death. The cough spoken of more than once in the preceding extracts, had continued without abatement. On Saturday, July 5th, she took an additional cold. In the evening of the succeeding Sabbath, her indisposition assumed a more painful and alarming character. The change, and her feelings in relation to it, are thus described by herself in a postscript to the letter commenced June 29th. "Since I wrote the above, my dear Mrs. S., my health has changed a good deal. You recollect my troublesome cough. Day before yesterday, I spit a little blood; and every day since, I have raised a little. A blister and a slight fever have reduced my strength; so that I feel that I am a frail, dying creature.

Dr. —— is very anxious to get me from Boston. He hopes a change of air will benefit me. I hope so too, and think of Connecticut, if I can get there. But, oh, how lonely I feel! Whom shall I look to? But hush every word that looks like complaining. The Lord has written me, widow, and desolate; and he has done well. Oh, for a heart to bless him now, to bless him forever! I need strong faith. I cannot write much. You must all love and pray for me. But we all want love to and confidence in the blessed God, a thousand times more than any thing else."

A second postscript to the same letter, written by another hand, and dated "Wednesday evening, July 9th," is as follows, "Dear Madam. Thus far our beloved friend had written to you. She is now unable to finish; and has requested me to do it, and to inform you of the particulars of her case. It is painful indeed to know it, but you would consider it cruel to keep you in ignorance of it. Last evening, and but a short time after she had written the above, she was taken with raising blood, to a degree which alarmed us very much. The physician took nearly a pint of blood from the arm, and she was considerably relieved from the irritation on the lungs. Another blister has also been applied, and has drawn very well. The doctor thinks there is no immediate danger, and hopes she will recover. He wishes her to keep entirely quiet, and not to speak a word. She is very much exhausted, and the weather to-day has been oppressively warm. We hope that the means which are using, will be blessed of Him in whose hands is the breath of every one, and that this precious woman may long be continued to her children, her friends, the Church, and the world. Many fervent prayers are ascending for her; and she will not be forgotten by you and her other dear friends in Connecticut. She is in a very quiet and happy frame of mind, sweetly feeling that she is in the hands of her covenant God."

These hopes in regard to her health were not realized. Every effort which skill and kindness could make, was made, for the removal of her complaint. Prayer was continually offered, by numerous and ardently attached Christian friends, for her restoration. But she continued gradually to decline.

In the latter part of August, she was removed to the house of a friend in the country, about ten miles from Boston, with the hope that a change of air and scene might be beneficial. And, for a time, she was more comfortable than while in the city; but the progress of her disease was not interrupted. While here, she wrote two or three short notes to her children, none of whom were with her. The following extracts are from one to her son at Andover.

September 19, 1823.

"My beloved child. Though I am very feeble, I feel a great desire to write you a few lines. My love and anxiety for you, are greater than any but a parent can know; and yet I tell you your faults. I want you to settle this truth in your mind for life, my J., that *he is your best friend who takes the most pains to correct your errors.* Beware of the person who tries to make you think well of yourself, especially when your own conscience is not quite satisfied.

20. Always love your sisters. Consider yourself as, in a sense, their protector and guardian. Write to them often: pray for them. You are likely to be left alone in a strange world. So have I been; and

> Thus far the Lord hath led me on;

so that I have never lacked any good thing. The way has been boisterous sometimes,

> But Judah's Lion guards the way,
> And guides the travellers HOME.

Make this friend yours.—But I must close. Love Mr. C., always love him. He is one of your best friends; and *faithful* friends are not very plenty in this treacherous world, my J. But, oh! that I could see you securing the friendship of your God. Remember, his vows are upon you, and you cannot, must not, go back. Farewell, beloved child. The Lord be with you continually."

About the close of the month of September, she desired the physician then attending her to inform her, definitely and frankly, whether there was, in his opinion, any prospect of her recovery. His answer was in the negative. She received it, with some feeling, but with submission, and thanked him for his kindness in being so explicit.

On the third of October, she was removed again to her residence in Boston; and proceeded immediately, to set her house in order, in preparation for death. She had an interview with the gentleman who has since, in compliance with the request then made, been appointed guardian to her children. She saw, or wrote to, the friends who have kindly undertaken the charge of their education. The following is an extract from one of her letters on this subject, dated October 20, 1823. "My dear—How I have longed to see you. Your mother said you would be here, and I have expected it with great anxiety. She said you would take S. Will you be her mother? Will your husband be her father? Will you watch over this dear child?—Yes, you will, and I shall die easy on this point. God helps me to trust the promise, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them."

"My strength decays. I have scarcely any appetite. But my Savior lays under me his everlasting arm; and I trust that all is well, and will be well forever. Pray that I may have his presence, and that I may glorify him to the end. Farewell, beloved friend.

During her illness, her pastor had frequent interviews with her. She, at one time, about a fortnight after the first bleeding from her lungs, had some doubts and fears in regard to the genuineness of her religious experience. Her apprehension was that she might never have been truly humbled for sin. But the feelings which this apprehension excited, were of such a character as to furnish to others, the most satisfactory evidence of her piety; as they clearly evinced a deep and practical conviction, that, without the light of God's countenance, there can be no real happiness. The cloud was, however, soon dissipated; and from that time till her death, she was favored with uniform peace of mind.

Her pastor, usually, when other engagements did not prevent, made brief minutes, upon returning home from visiting her, of the conversation during the interview. A few of these, as a specimen, will be here inserted.

"Tuesday, October 28, 1823. Called on Mrs. Huntington about half past nine in the morning. Found that she had failed considerably since my last visit. To an inquiry in relation to the state of her mind since Friday, she replied, "I think I have felt more of the presence of Christ than I did when I saw you last. I have not had those strong views and joyful feelings, with which I have sometimes been favored. My mind is weak, and I cannot direct and fix my thoughts as I once could. But I think I *have* fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before me in the precious Gospel; and He, who is the foundation of that Hope, will never forsake me." Then, with a most interesting expression of countenance, she said, "I trust we shall meet in heaven, and spend an eternity in praising our dear Redeemer." It was replied, "We shall, if we give him our hearts, and continue faithful to him unto the end." "I feel," she answered, "that I have been very, very unfaithful. But he is merciful, his blood cleanseth from all sin, and I trust he has blotted my sins from the book of his remembrance. Oh, what should we do without Christ?" "As much debtors," it was remarked, to free grace at the end of our course as when we begin it." "More," she replied, "far more; for we sin against greater light and love, after we are born again. Yes, it is all of free grace. If it were not, what would become of me?" It was answered, "You would have perished, justly perished; but now, when you enter heaven, you will stand before the angels, a monument of God's justice as well as of his free grace, for he is just in justifying those that believe in Jesus." "Yes," she replied; "what a glorious plan! what a precious Savior! Oh, that I could love him more! Pray that I may love and glorify him forever."

After prayer, she said, "I hope you pray for me at other times, as well as when you are here. Ask for me the continual presence of Christ, and that I may honor his religion to the end." It was answered, "We constantly remember you in our prayers: many of God's people are deeply interested for you, and are continually supplicating the throne of grace in your behalf." "I know it," she replied; "and that is the reason why I have been favored with such a comfortable state of mind, for Satan has desired to have me, and to sift me as wheat. I hope they will continue to pray for me; and may God bless them with the consolations they ask for me." It was remarked, "He who said to Peter, 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,' is I trust, continually interceding for you; and him the Father heareth always." She said, "I hope he does intercede for me; and that is one of my greatest consolations; for he will be heard. But you know he presents the prayers of the saints; and I want the satisfaction of reflecting, that he is continually presenting many of them in behalf of me and my dear children."

"On Friday, October 31st, at nine o'clock, A. M., found her more comfortable than on Tuesday last. She said, "My mind has generally been in a peaceful frame since I saw you. But I want to realize the presence and preciousness of Christ, more distinctly and constantly than my great weakness permits me to do." Some remarks were made respecting the provisions of the Covenant of Grace as adapted to all our weaknesses. "The Bible," it was said, "tells us that, 'He knoweth our frame, he remembereth that we are dust;' 'a bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench;' 'We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.' " She said, "Glorious covenant! precious promises! I have given myself, soul and body, to Him in whom they are all yea and amen, and I do not fear. I desire to have him do with me as it shall please him."

After prayer she said, "We have indeed a faithful God, a precious Savior; but how limited our knowledge, how imperfect our views of eternal things!" It was replied, "What we know not now, we shall know hereafter. Soon, if we are Christians, we shall see face to face, and know even as we are known. And now we know that when Christ shall appear, if we are the children of God, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "That," she said, "is enough. How different will be our views! How differently shall we view sin! I seem never to have known what it is, till within the last few weeks. And now, I am convinced I know very little of its evil and hateful nature. How can we trifle with it as we do?"

This day had been set apart by the church to which she belonged, as a season of fasting and prayer; the forenoon to be spent, as far as paramount duties would permit, in private devotion, and a meeting of the church to be held in the afternoon, and again in the evening. She alluded to the subject, expressing a hope that it might be a pleasant and profitable season to the whole church, as pleasant and profitable as she had found the last church fast; and added, "I wish I could be with you." It was answered, "You can; we are going to the throne of grace, and you can be there also." She replied, "I will try. May the Holy Spirit be in the midst of you, producing in every heart, godly sorrow for past unfaithfulness, and reviving the spirit of obedience and of effort to promote the work of the Lord!"

She then inquired respecting the "Ladies' Distributing Bible Association," and the Female Associations in connexion with the "Auxiliary Foreign Missionary Society of

Boston and Vicinity," which had recently been formed in the city; and, upon receiving some account of them, expressed her satisfaction in being permitted to hear of these new and systematic efforts to extend the Redeemer's kingdom. It was observed, "You see God's work on earth will go on, although you and other instruments are laid aside." She replied, "Oh, what have I been? Nothing. I have done nothing, compared with what I ought to have done. He needs no instruments; it is infinite condescension in him to employ them: and when he takes away those he has employed, he has no further use for them here. I am going, I hope, where I shall serve him better—without sin, and with all my powers, forever."

"Friday, November 7. To the usual inquiry respecting the state of her mind, she said, "Mrs. Graham accurately describes my feelings, when she says, 'Thus far has the Lord brought me through the wilderness; bearing, chastising, forgiving, restoring. I am near to Jordan's flood. May my blessed High Priest, and Ark of the Covenant lead on my staggering steps the little further I have to go.'* I have had no rapturous views of the heaven to which I hope I am going, no longings to depart. But I have generally been enabled to feel a calm submission, and to realize the fulness and the preciousness of the Savior. I desire to feel perfect resignation to the will of God, because it is his will. O how sweet, to be willing to be just where, and just what, God pleases! to rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. This, in its perfection, is, I think, a principal source of the happiness of heaven. Pray that God would enable me to feel thus while suffering from weakness and pain, and entering the dark valley."

Frequently, during her sickness, she had expressed to her pastor, a desire that he would, if possible, be with her in her last moments. On Thursday, December 4th, he was informed, about three o'clock in the afternoon, that she had failed greatly since morning, and would probably survive but a little longer. He immediately repaired to her residence, and found her sleeping, but very restless, and breathing with great difficulty. She continued in this state, except that respiration became constantly more difficult, through the afternoon and evening. About eleven o'clock the difficulty of breathing became so great, as to overcome the disposition to slumber. Intelligence, it was found, still remained. She was asked "if she knew she was near her end." She answered, by a sign, in the affirmative. It was said, "I hope you feel the presence of the Savior sustaining and comforting you." She assented. "Your faith and hope in him are unshaken?" Her reply was in the affirmative.—A few minutes after, her sight failed; and, at twenty minutes past eleven, her spirit entered into rest.

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* See Life and Writings of Mrs. Isabella Graham, p. 161, third New-York edition.

Her end was full of peace,
Fitting her uniform piety serene.
'Twas rather the deep humble calm of faith,
Than her high triumph; and resembled more
The unnoticed setting of a clear day's sun,
Than his admired departure in a blaze
Of glory, bursting from a clouded course.

SERMON.

ROMANS viii. 28.

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD.

The method of instruction generally pursued in the Scriptures, concurs with what we know of the nature of the human mind, in evincing, that the way to inculcate, most effectually, the doctrines of religion, is to exhibit them in the form of living and palpable action. Every day's experience teaches, that the impression made on the mind, and the effect produced on the character, by formal statements, and abstract discussions, of truth, is feeble and trifling, compared with the influence of the same truth, when exhibited and illustrated by a series of definite and intelligible conduct. So obvious is this principle of human nature, that it is assumed as an axiom, that instruction communicated by example, is far more effectual, than that given in the form of precept. And if God has undertaken to instruct our apostate race, in the knowledge of his perfections, and of their duty to him, for the purpose of improving their character, and thus promoting their happiness, we may be sure that the form in which he has conveyed that instruction, is the one best adapted to attain the end for which it was communicated,—to produce upon the mind the impression desired, and exert a real and lasting influence upon the character. What then is the method he has adopted? Not merely the form of general statements and abstract discussions, but chiefly that of visible and intelligible conduct. He has not only given us in his word, distinct and accurate statements of the attributes which constitute his adorable character; he has also presented to our contemplation a most interesting series of actions, in which his perfections, as far as we are concerned to know them, are fully and perspicuously displayed. He has not only stated the requirements of his law, and affirmed its immutability; he has also given us an example of perfect conformity to it in the life of the Savior, and shown us its indispensableness, in exacting from Him, when made under it in our behalf, a full equivalent for its penalty. He has not only told us what are the characteristics of his children; but he has exhibited them to our inspection in the experience of the saints. He has not only pledged his veracity, and confirmed the declaration with an oath, that his promises shall be fulfilled; he has also shewn us, in the history of his people, that his faithfulness never fails. And that these exhibitions may not be in vain, he has directed us to search the scriptures daily,—frequently and habitually to contemplate the developement there made of his character and will; to see how He walked, who left us an example that we should follow his steps; to observe his dealings with his chosen, that we may learn to trust in his mercy, and be followers of those who, through faith and patience, have inherited the promises.

A beloved member of this church has, we believe, recently entered upon that glorious inheritance, whose life and character strikingly illustrated the truth and efficacy of our holy religion; whose worth was so great, and so universally acknowledged, that an exhibition of her character, for the purpose of communicating important instruction, may, safely be made; whose death is deeply and universally lamented, and should, for that reason, as well as on account of the relation she sustained to this congregation, be carefully improved.

This, I have thought, would be most effectually done, by employing her history for the exhibition of the truth and efficacy of those doctrines which she so ardently loved, and so highly adorned. In determining what particular truth is most strikingly exhibited in her experience, I may have erred. If I have, it is to be attributed to a mistake of judgment, not to the want of opportunity to know her history and character. For three years I have been favored with her intimate acquaintance, in circumstances peculiarly calculated to test and exhibit her character. During the whole of this period, I have enjoyed, I have reason to believe, her entire confidence, not only as her pastor, but as her friend. I have had a most intimate knowledge of her consolations and trials, her sorrows and joys; and, through her kindness and confidence, I have been furnished with the best means of learning what were the dealings of God with her, and what the effect of those dealings upon her, previously to our personal acquaintance.*

The truth which her history most strikingly illustrates is, if I mistake not, the precious and consoling one asserted in our text, ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD.

That the character here spoken of was hers, those who hear me, and to whom she was so well known, will not question. If those who love God can, in any instances be known by us, I hesitate not to say, that our departed friend was of that happy number.

She was deeply impressed with her obligations to her Maker and Redeemer, with the sinfulness of her heart, and her need of an interest in the merits and grace of her Savior, when in her sixth year. These impressions were renewed when she was about ten years of age. The latter of these was regarded by herself, as the time of her translation from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

The event has shewn that she was designed by her Creator for great usefulness on earth, and—we think we are warranted in adding—for an exalted station in heaven. To fit her for this, was, of course, most effectually to promote her highest good.

For this purpose the Author of her being, in the first place, conferred upon her every requisite natural endowment. Her talents were of a high order; her disposition ardent and aspiring, but, at the same time, amiable and attractive. And she was, through life, favored with the means and opportunities for mental cultivation, and was always disposed diligently to improve them. But intellectual endowments, and natural accomplishments, were not all that were necessary to fit her for fulfilling the designs of Jehovah concerning her. Those powers and accomplishments must be sanctified, and that in a high degree. For this purpose, he not only early took possession of her heart by his Holy Spirit, he also led her through a course of discipline, eminently calculated to correct the few faults in her character, and produce an unusual deadness to the world, deep humility, and strong confidence in God, with uncommon devotedness to his service, and the promotion of his glory.

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* Her journal and other private writings, which she committed to me in trust for her children. It may be proper to add, that from the conversation had with her at the time alluded to, I am satisfied that an expectation that any of her writings would be published after her death, had never entered her mind.

In the early part of her Christian course, she had much and a very high degree of religious joy; felt as if she could do any thing, yea, even die, for Christ; had the most delightful anticipations of heaven, and would sit for hours meditating, almost in a state of ecstacy, upon the vanity of the world, the frailty of life, and the happiness in reserve for the righteous.* But, like most converts who have not yet been called to the trial of their faith, she knew little of her own heart. There was in it, as she afterwards discovered, much depravity,—much of self-confidence, and of a spirit which, when her circumstances favored such an exhibition of it, would assume the form of pride; she would, if left to herself, do little, yea, nothing for Christ. To prepare her for what God had designed her, it was necessary that these deficiencies and mistakes should be discovered to her, and corrected;—that her pride should be subdued, and her self-confidence destroyed; that she should be effectually taught that she was nothing, and that Christ was all in all. If we shall find that the dealings of God with her, were eminently calculated to produce, and did actually produce, this result, it will be evident that his dispensations towards her were for her good.

Before distinctly noticing these dispensations, it is requisite to state, that she had, naturally, a most tender sensibility; which, while it made her, as already intimated, ardent in her attachments and in her desires to do good, also produced a proneness to forbode evil where none was impending, to magnify and shrink from difficulties that actually existed, and caused her to suffer most intensely under affliction. If any are disposed to call this a weakness, let them know, that it was this very trait in her natural character that gave it its principal loveliness, and laid the foundation for those exalted religious attainments, by which she was so distinguished.

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* Journal, 1814, April 24.

Let us now contemplate the means which God employed for the purpose of teaching her those lessons which, we have seen, she needed to learn, to fit her for the accomplishment of his gracious purposes concerning her.

I. He placed her, when quite young* and inexperienced, in a most responsible and difficult station, where her character and conduct would be scrutinized by multitudes, where hundreds of her own sex would be looking to her example as a model for their imitation, and where her talents would cause it to be expected of her to take the lead in most of the efforts made by females for extending the Redeemer's kingdom;—a task far more difficult then than now, because general efforts of benevolence by females had but recently commenced, not a few were disposed to consider all such efforts on their part wholly improper, and it was yet to be determined what kind and degree of exertions were consistent with propriety. He gave her a strong desire to be useful, eminently useful, in the station he had assigned her; a desire to live in such a manner as to convince her family, and all with whom she had intercourse, that the glory of God was her ultimate aim in all that she did, and the enjoyment of him her most ardent aspiration, her unremitted pursuit, her unspeakable comfort,—to prepare her children for doing good on earth, and inheriting the kingdom of heaven,—to be the means of advancing her fellow Christians in holiness, and of recommending religion, by her example and conversation, to the impenitent,—to employ, in the most discrete and effectual manner, her talents and opportunities for contributing to the extension of the kingdom of Christ. But when she contemplated, and was about to enter upon, the actual performance of these duties, she was frequently so impressed with their magnitude, and the difficulty of discharging them, as almost to sink in despondency. Thus she was effectually taught her own weakness, her entire impotency;

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* Nineteen.

made sensible that in Christ alone she could obtain strength equal to her day; and led to apply to him for grace to help her in times of need, in that spirit of humility and entire dependance which always obtains the blessing it seeks. And, as a natural consequence of this discipline, she became more and more distrustful of herself, and attained, continually, higher views of that faith which, when in steady and vigorous exercise, will carry us through every duty and every trial. So that she could say, that, she had learned from her own experience, that "God will require nothing of us which, if we look to him, he will not give us grace to perform."

2. But this was not the only discipline her heavenly Father employed in fitting her for the high destination for which he intended her. He also repeatedly and severely afflicted her.

I have already had occasion to remark, that her attachments were uncommonly strong. She loved her friends with tenderness and ardor. To promote their interests and enjoy their society, contributed, in an unusual degree, to her happiness. The loss of them would, therefore, be eminently calculated to teach her the vanity of earthly good, the utter impossibility of finding, in herself, or in any creature, a source of permanent enjoyment, and to cause her to give her heart entirely to God, to take Christ and the inheritance he has provided for his people as her supreme, her only portion; and thus to contribute to her advancement in holiness. Few persons have, in the short period to which her life was extended, been called more frequently to mourn the death of friends, or to suffer bereavements more afflicting than hers. Though not thirty-three years of age when herself removed from this state of trial, most of her connexions and early intimate acquaintances had been taken before her. And now mark the illustration furnished by her history of the truth asserted in our text, in connexion with that other precious assurance given to the people of God, that "as their days, so shall their strength be." In the early part of the year 1814, she was led, in consequence of an indisposition, which seemed to threaten the disease that ultimately caused her death, to resolve "to set apart, from that time, a short portion of every day for special prayer for divine aid in every season of affliction, and especially for strength to conquer her last enemy, death." A resolution, which, it is believed, she kept, as far as circumstances would admit, to the close of life; and which she was not led to adopt and observe in vain. In a little time her series of bereavements commenced. This resolution was adopted in May. In the following July she was called to mourn the death of her father, and in December, 1817, of her mother. In September, 1819, she was written widow, and her prospects in life entirely changed. In the fall of 1821, two of her children were removed by death; one of whom, from the name he bore, and the circumstances of his birth, was peculiarly dear to her. And these are but a part of her bereavements, during the period in which they occurred. In all these afflictions, her suffering was intense; in their immediate prospect, she felt as if her feeble frame could not sustain them; when they came, her heart bled at every pore. In the death of her excellent husband, all who hear me know, she incurred no common loss; she felt as if every fountain of earthly happiness was exhausted. Her youngest child,—"the last bud of her earthly hopes, the fair blossom which sprung up from the root of her former prosperity,"* to excite expectations of enjoyment in nourishing its growth and seeing its fruit, and then wither and die,—was taken from her, with scarce a moment's warning. The shock was almost overwhelming; her sufferings greater than any which, in similar circumstances, I ever witnessed. But her merciful Father, when he had thus taught her that her strength was weakness, uniformly appeared for her support and consolation; gave her such views of the rectitude and goodness of his proceedings, such manifestations of the fulness and preciousness of Christ, such undoubted tokens of his favor, and such sweet experience of the joys of communion with him, that she soon became composed and tranquil, sustained her trials with a fortitude which all who saw her admired, and learned that even the most innocent and virtuous earthly enjoyments are vanity, and God the only portion that can satisfy the soul.

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* Journal, 1821, September 1,

Such were the means which God employed, to fit her for the accomplishment of his gracious purposes concerning her. Let us now contemplate their effect upon her character. The influence which we have seen they were calculated to exert, and did, at the time, actually exert, was not a transient, but a permanent one. She ascertained the weaknesses and deficiencies of her natural character, and her besetting sins, and learned how to resist and subdue the one, and correct the other. And so complete was her success, that few, if any, of her later acquaintances would have suspected, had she not left us a record of the fact, that she had any such conflicts to sustain. She acquired a permanent and unusually deep sense of the depravity and deceitfulness of the human heart, and of the vileness and hatefulness of sin, in every form and degree, in the heart as well as in the life. She obtained an extensive and accurate knowledge of the insidious influence of the corrupt propensities of our nature, and of the means by which they are to be detected, and resisted, and overcome; and thus became eminently qualified to guide those who were inquiring the way of life, and those who had entered upon the path of the just, and to comfort those who were mourning in Zion. She was made deeply sensible of her utter destitution of every good thing, and led to apply habitually to Christ, "as an empty sinner to a full Savior;* so that, although, in view of the multiform duties of life, she often exclaimed, "How am I sufficient for these things," she could add, "Yet I do trust that I shall be enabled to do all things through Christ strengthening me."† She was induced to strive to keep constantly near to God; for experience had taught her that when she "felt entirely sundered from earthly hope and happiness, and looked to God as her only portion, she found his arm strong, his grace sufficient, his presence precious, his promises sure; she was happy in his will here, and looked forward to be happy in his love and presence forever."‡ This experience of the happiness of communion with God, united with her sense of duty to strive to be perfect as her

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* Journal, 1813, Dec. 5.

† Journal, 1814, April 24.

‡ Journal, 1820, Jan. 14.

Father in heaven is perfect, produced an ardent desire and most strenuous efforts to grow in grace, to attain greater, yea complete, conformity to the divine likeness. Often did her "spirit faint with desires to keep under the body of sin, her heart pant to be near and like her God."* "Life she considered principally desirable as a medium of glorifying God. To live to the flesh, even if there were no difference to be made between the righteous and the wicked at death, seemed to her undesirable. Those blessed words, TO BE HOLY, frequently kindled desires in her soul inexpressibly more elevated and ardent, and produced joys more delightful and transporting, than all the combined allurements of the world."† Thus she attained an uncommon degree of superiority to the world; carried with her, into every circle, a spirit of elevated piety, an ardent desire to honor her Savior, and promote the spiritual interests of men. She discharged every duty of life in the fear of God, and with a fidelity seldom equalled. She became an example of Christian excellence and usefulness, which all admired, and her fellow disciples regarded as a model worthy of their careful imitation. She exhibited the power and preciousness of the principles she loved, even unto the end; and, we trust, ascended in triumph, to the mansion prepared for her in the skies.

Such, through grace, were the effects of the divine dispensations toward her. Who then can doubt, that they were all ordered in mercy, and made to work together for her good? She now certainly regards them in this light. She did thus regard them when she, as yet, knew their design and influence but in part. "How *good* was God," she would say, in reference to her trials, "thus to embitter my earthly cistern, that I might not sit and sip to my everlasting regret and destruction."‡ "My path has been rough; but I have not had one trial which my heavenly Father could, in faithfulness, have spared me. He has dealt with me only in loving-kindness and tender mercy. I have not a doubt now, I shall see hereafter, that all his dealings with me have been for my good."*—Verily, ALL THINGS DO WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD TO THEM THAT LOVE GOD.

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* Journal 1815, April 27.

† Journal 1813, Nov. 17.

‡ Journal 1812, Aug. 11.

1. The first reflection suggested by the view we have taken, applies especially to those in this assembly who know nothing, by experience, of the consolations of piety. It is this. How precious, how invaluable, the possession of those consolations, even in the present life! The world in which we live, is a world of disappointment and trial. None of our race are entirely exempt from affliction. "Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." Is it not a privilege, an invaluable blessing, to carry with us, while passing through this world of sorrow, the assurance that our afflictions, as well as our mercies, shall all be made to work together for our good? What happiness, that deserves the name, can there be in such a world, without the consolations and the hopes of piety? "I often wonder," said she, on a certain occasion, whose voice this day addresses us from the tomb, "I often wonder, when I look at people who have no religion, what can be their support through the wilderness of this world. I am almost at a loss to account for their apparent happiness. How, for instance, can affliction be tolerable, except as the soul is enabled to repose, with some confidence, upon the wisdom and equity of the divine administration? How can comforts be relished, when we know that they may all be taken from us within one short hour? What can reconcile the mind, to its complicated vexations and trials, which places its supreme hopes of happiness upon the changing things of this world? And as to motives of living, take away the primary one of the Christian,—the desire to glorify God and be useful to men, and I hardly know what one could wish to live for in such a world. When I see a person of keen sensibilities and lively affections, drooping under the weight of sorrow resulting from the unfeeling conduct of those about him, or from any of those incidents in providence so overwhelming to the generous heart, I exclaim to myself, Ah! how that man needs religion! That would set a firm stepping place upon the stormy surge; and with such a

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* The substance of a remark made during her last sickness.

foundation, he could not be moved. It is the hope of heaven and its concomitants alone, that can turn this valley of tears into an abode of peace, and hope, and joy. The pleasures of religion are unmingled pleasures. Here no dash of bitter offends the taste, no alloy, no corroding mixture, mars the enjoyment. How do earthly comforts dwindle; yes, they are indeed lighter than air, more frail than bubbles, compared with that peace, passing understanding, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost."*—This testimony, my friends, I know you feel to be worthy of your regard; for you respected the piety, you loved the worth, of its author. Let it be remembered, and so improved, that when you meet her at the judgment-seat, she may find it was not given in vain.

2. Let those who have a good hope that they are interested in the Divine promises learn, in whatsoever state they are, therewith to be content. The terms of that Covenant, my Christian brethren, in which you trust, and which you know is ordered in all things and sure, render it certain, that whatever be the dispensations of providence toward you, they are the fruit of your heavenly Father's love,—just what He, who knows all your necessities, and what will be the influence of his dealings with you, sees to be, at the time, most conducive to your happiness, as well as to his own glory. And can you not confide in his wisdom, and goodness, and fidelity? The whole history we have been contemplating testifies the safety and happiness of doing so. The prominent trait in the piety of our departed friend, was confidence in God. She hoped that she had given herself to him; and she had no doubt, that, if the surrender had been sincere, he would do with her, in all things, well. She longed and prayed for perfect resignation to the divine will; and, under her severest trials, she could say, "It is a part of God's infinitely perfect plan of government. I therefore lay my hand upon my mouth and say, 'Thy will be done.' " She strongly felt, and often mentioned the consoling truth for the encouragement of others, that God would carry his people through every duty and every trial, if they would only place their confidence in him. It was her joy and consolation, that Jehovah reigns; her delight to commit herself and all her interests, to his disposal.

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* Journal 1815, June 29, and 1814, June 10.

To be willing to be, to do, and to suffer, just what God pleases, to be satisfied with all that he does now, and satisfied to have him do what shall seem to him good hereafter; —"this, this,"—she would say "is happiness; this, I think, is a foretaste of heaven." And this was the habitual frame of her mind for several months before her death; in this frame, her spirit took its flight to the eternal world. If you, my brethren, would experience the consolations by which she was cheered, while passing through the wilderness of this world, if you wish your latter end to be like hers, cultivate the same spirit. Trust in the Lord at all times, and you shall never be desolate; you shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be moved.

3. That we may derive the greatest benefit from the dispensations of providence, let us imitate the example of our lamented sister in using the means of rightly improving them.

For this purpose, she was diligent in her endeavors to cultivate personal piety. She daily studied with care the Holy Scriptures, and devoted a part of her time to religious meditation. A portion of every day, commonly in the early part of it, she spent in secret prayer. It was on the altar of secret devotion, that she kindled that pure flame, which was generally seen burning so brightly, when she was engaged in the active duties of life. She frequently examined herself, not merely for the purpose of ascertaining whether she might hope that she was a child of God, but also, whether she had made any progress in the divine life. At the close of every day, her conduct, and the temper of heart she had maintained, were reviewed; the evening preceding the Sabbath was specially devoted to this important duty. If at any time she found she had declined in her Christian course, or any trial was apprehended, or any duty of peculiar difficulty to be performed, she observed a season of private fasting and prayer. She loved the sanctuary and its solemn services, and was careful to have her mind in a devotional frame while attending upon them, reflecting as she entered, and cherishing the impression while she remained within, the sacred edifice, that she might never enter it again. She viewed attendance upon the holy communion as a most important and solemn service, and was always careful to prepare herself for it, by self-examination, reflection, and prayer. She endeavored to trace, in every event, the hand of God, and to derive from every occurrence some spiritual instruction.

Her religion, however, was not confined to her closet, and to the sanctuary. She endeavored to carry it with her into all the business and circumstances of life. She did not, like some professed believers in the doctrines of grace, feel, that because she was to be saved by the merits of Christ alone, there was no necessity of being careful to maintain good works. So far from finding this to be the influence of those doctrines, which she firmly believed and ardently loved, she has left it in testimony as the result of her experience, that 'when her hope of acceptance solely on the ground of the merits of Christ was the strongest, she felt most unquenchable desires to serve him with her heart, her whole heart.'* To glorify God and do good to men was her habitual aim. The duties of her family she endeavored to discharge with fidelity, from a regard to the will of Jehovah, who, by placing her in that relation, had required them at her hands. The intercourse of friendship she sought to make of a profitable character, remembering that for our words, as well as for our actions, we must give account at the judgment-seat of Christ. She was ever ready to visit and comfort the afflicted, to instruct the ignorant, to warn the careless, to entreat the impenitent to be reconciled to God. She prayed much, and delighted to employ her counsels and efforts, for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom. In the work of benevolence she has left her sex a noble example. Her exertions in this cause, are known to have been great, and extended to a variety of objects, and productive of a large amount of good; yet they never produced in her any neglect of domestic duties, or any transgression of the bounds of strict propriety. Daughters of Zion, let it be your ambition to follow in the glorious path she trod. Believers in Christ, make your religion your governing principle, the business of your lives; and, when your career on earth is about to terminate, you may say, with her, "My Father hath done all things well, he hath made all things to work together for my good."

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* Journal 1820, June 9.

POETRY.

WRITTEN AFTER READING BUCHANAN'S CHRISTIAN RESEARCHES, IN 1813.

WHEN I on fancy's pinion ride,
Far o'er the ocean's rolling tide,
  To India's burning shore,
Where the chain'd soul in thraldom sleeps,
And Satan his dark empire keeps,
My eye a pitying torrent weeps
  Of grief unfelt before.

There, whelm'd in superstition's night,
Unknown the Gospel's cheering light,
  The fetter'd spirit lies;
Left to dim Nature's twinkling ray,
Which can but feeble light convey,
It sinks, to doubt and sin a prey,
  Nor longs, nor seeks, to rise.

Yet reason *there*, a Sovereign owns,
But, stupid, bows to stocks and stones;
  (A path she's ever trod.)
Reason reduc'd, can never climb
To truths so glorious, so divine,
As in the sacred Gospel shine,
  Without the aid of God.

And say, oh Christian! can you view
The wretched Heathen's guilt and wo,
  Nor drop one pitying tear?
Think—that, though sunk in sin and shame,
On you the Indian has a claim;
He bears a *brother's* sacred name:
  Behold him! comfort, cheer.

Yes, let the Gospel's gladd'ning voice
His realm illume, reform, rejoice.
Go, tell him Jesus reigns;
Bid him forsake his impious rites;
Tell him that God his love invites;
Tell him in MERCY He delights,
And waits to break his chains.

And think how high your joy will rise,
When, thron'd in bliss above the skies,
You meet the ransom'd throng,
And see, with song of holiest fire,
The Indian foremost in the choir!
How will it raise your rapture high'r,
And swell your joyous song?

THE SABBATH. WRITTEN IN 1814.

Another holy day of rest returns;
The curtain gently falls, and sober eve
Ushers, with modest step, the Sabbath in.*
Sweet day! I bid thee welcome. Now, from noise
And all the jarring tumults of the world,
My wearied soul retires, and rests herself,
And seeks, in contemplation, heavenly food
To renovate the powers which six day's toil
Has made obtuse and languid. Glad I call
My roving spirit homeward, and refresh,
In holy intercourse with heaven, its dull
And scattered faculties. How far the world
And all its empty forms of bliss retire.
I hear its noisy clamor from afar,
And feel compassion's unavailing tear
Wrung from my heart at thought of its illusions.
'Tis sweet to lay aside the spirit's shackles,
And, for a while, rise upward in the view
Of God and his perfections. Here is room
For thought to stretch and widen, till the theme,
Immense, and still enlarging as pursu'd,
O'erwhelms the soul, and makes it pant for heav'n.
How awful bright each rival glory shines
Of different attributes, harmonious!
Here I behold meek mercy's angel form.
Here Justice lifts her awful head, and holds,
With equal hand, her everlasting scales;

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* It was the habit of the writer, to commence the appropriate duties of the Sabbath, at early candle-lighting on Saturday evening.

Points to the law of love which angels own,
Owning, obey, and in obeying, find
Their life, their blessedness, their heaven; and swears
That man transgressing it must die, or blot
The eternal page of Truth immutable.
  Now bursts, as day's refulgent orb appears
To the strain'd eye which long has watch'd the dawn,
Resplendent, passing admiration, on the view,
The mighty plan which heaven's eternal King
Concerted with his equal Son, ere earth
Was form'd, or man was made, or lost,
To snatch a sinking world from righteous ruin,
Yet vindicate the law which sealed its doom.
A plan omnipotent, whose vast design
Draws in its wondrous compass, all which man
Can need, though lost, and all which God requires;
And, sweetly blending, harmonizing all,
O'erpowers, and mingles in its mighty rays,
The congregated glories of the whole.
  Dear day of rest and meditation sweet!
Ne'er may'st thou find my heart so treach'rous grown,
As to prefer the worldling's day to thee;
But may each weekly visit find my soul
More raised above earth's gilded vanities,
Till the last Sabbath of the waiting saint,
The endless rest which Christ has promis'd, come!

WRITTEN IN MAY, 1820, AFTER THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND.*

Smile, Nature smile; the tearful eye
  Of WIDOWHOOD thou needs't not wear:
Winter, thy sullen foe's gone by;
  Fresh bound thy streams, soft glows thine air.

Weep'st thou, to lift thy youthful brow
  And smile, while aches this bleeding heart?
Oh, I have lov'd and love thee now,
  Chang'd Nature as to me thou art.

Yes, thou may'st smile, and not, for me,
  Enshroud thy virgin charms in gloom,
And veil thy face in sympathy
  With shade and sadness of the tomb.

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* Published in the Boston Recorder of June 10, 1820.

There was —, and low that form is laid,
And still that bosom's conscious glow,
And deep the sleep, and dense the shade,
And hushed the life-blood's vital flow.

He lov'd thee too; and he is gone;
From this fond heart so early riven.
And now, thou see'st me all alone,
To weep, and trace my way to heaven.

Abroad, upon thy modest face,
Meek nature, earliest love of mine,
I fix my sad and silent gaze,
And mourn that alter'd look of thine.

For not in all thy deserts wide,—
In blooming vale, or mountain gray,
Or stormy ocean's troubled tide,
In earth, or air, or sky, or sea,—

Meets me the friend I lov'd so well,
And ne'er shall meet on mortal shore:
And long this bosom's anguish'd swell
Shall speak—that we shall meet no more.

Yet, there's a land, which ne'er was trod
By mortal foot: and there is he.
Nature! there dwells thy Maker, God;
And there, that friend these eyes shall see.

And soon, life's journey measur'd o'er,
And death's dividing torrent pass'd,
My soul shall reach that holy shore,
That quiet, peaceful home, at last.
Then death shall ne'er our spirits sever,
But we shall meet, nor part forever.

TO HER INFANT SON, BORN AFTER HIS FATHER'S DEATH.

WRITTEN IN 1820.

Sleep on, sleep on, thou little stranger,
Ere thy birth an orphan made,
Usher'd into life and danger
'Neath affliction's deepest shade.

A father's eye shall never meet thee
With affection's kindly glow.

A father's welcome ne'er shall greet thee,
Baby, in this world of woe.

Death, that parent, friend, did sever
From this widow'd heart of mine;
Quench'd that eye's fond glance forever,
Ere this little life was thine.

Often now the burning tear
From thy mother's eye is streaming,
As she bends, 'twixt joy and fear,
O'er thy infant form so dear;
Thine, the while, serenely beaming,
'Why the tear that dims thine eye,
'Ah, my mother, tell me, why?

Not because high heav'n did pour
On me alone that storm of sorrow;
And not because time's fleeting wing
Shall never, on its pinions bring
To me the long deferr'd to-morrow
Which shall that friend again restore.

* * * * * * * * *

But a dang'rous sea thou'rt crossing;
He, thy guide, to heaven has gone;
Storms that ocean deep are tossing;—
Baby, thou art all alone.
And, oh! what evils may betide thee?
Treach'rous rocks, and shoals, and snares;
No father's watchful eye to guide thee!
'Tis this that wakes thy mother's tears.

The following lines were added after the death of this child, in 1821

'Tis over; past, forever past, that sea
Of tempest, snare and storm, so late my dread.
No more I view thee darling boy, expos'd
Unfriended, on that frowning deep, where late
Thy slender little bark first tried its skill.
The angry wave on thee shall beat again
Its foaming billow, never. Nor rock, nor shoal,
Nor whirlpool's fatal eddy, nor the ills
Innumerable which my fancy painted,
Shall ever harm thee more. Safe art thou lodg'd
Beyond the reach of all I felt or fear'd.
Oh! how I fear'd for thee! how truant thought,
Presumptuous, unbelieving as I was,
Would * * * * * *

ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT SON. WRITTEN IN NOV. 1821.*

Ah! where is he, with the eyes so blue,
And the shining yellow hair,
And the lofty brow, still serenely mild,
And the cheek so angel fair?
Oh, spirit lov'd! who, like vision of light,
Stole across my path, in that fearful night,
When the storm was high, and thy sire far away,
And smil'd through the darkness,—how short was thy stay?
Like fleeting cloud, that by tempest is driven
Athwart the stormy sky,
Or dew-drop that's wet, at close of even,
From nature's humid eye.
That cheek *was* fair, but 'tis deadly pale,
The last living tint has fled;
And the cherish'd form, on this bosom that slept,
In the damp tomb rests its head.
Soon was finish'd thine errand to this distant shore,
And thy mission of love, dearest babe, soon was o'er.
In my soul's saddest hour of distress wert thou given,
To assuage the deep anguish, then vanish to heaven.
Though oblivion's dews settle fast on thee now;
There's *one* heart shall forget thee, never;
And the stroke that shall end all my sorrows below,
Shall unite us again forever.

* Published in the Boston Recorder of December 8, 1821.

THE END.

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